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THE  
ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S  
MAGAZINE:

A WORK DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF

THE ARTS OF DESIGN

AND

THE CULTIVATION OF TASTE.

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"THE BASIS OF ALL EXCELLENCE IS TRUTH."

"VISU CARENTEM MAGNA PARS VERI LATET."

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EDITED BY

E. V. RIPPING & LEE



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THE  
ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S  
MAGAZINE.

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TO THE  
PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

GENTLEMEN,

I OFFER you the homage of a dedication as a mark of the respect in which I hold your talents as artists and your qualities as men; but especially to manifest, in the strongest manner I can, the sense I entertain and the conviction I feel of the boundless good which has been done to the cause of the Fine Arts by the Institution over which you preside. The foundation of the Royal Academy not only first gave footing and security to the Art of Painting in England, but provided a station in society for its professors; and, in addition to what it has achieved in itself, has been the parent of other institutions, which are estimable for being its imitators. Whatever honour the Arts of Design may reflect upon the character of the nation, or whatever advantages, facilities, and hopes attend upon Art at the present hour, are fairly and honestly to be attributed to those by whom it was called into existence, as well as those by whom it has been and still continues to be supported.

Self-created and self-sustained the Royal Academy will ever be regarded as a proud monument of the intelligence, the talent, the perseverance, and endurance of British artists.

That the little work now put forth may tend to advance the interests of Art, and aid in the efforts made by its professors, is the earnest wish and the desired reward of,

Gentlemen,

Your devoted and faithful servant,

March 20. 1843.

E. V. RIPPINGILLE.

## ADDRESS TO THE READER.

COURTEOUS READER,

IN the commencement of our acquaintance, which I hope will be long, pleasant, and useful to both, allow me to convey to you some idea of the character of the work with which you are for the first time presented. You of course wish to be made acquainted with its general plan, the objects it is intended to embrace, and the mode in which it is meant to treat them. Should you feel disposed to ask, what occasion there is for such a work, a very natural question upon the appearance of a new one, I shall not shrink from answering you; and in addition, I shall add a brief catalogue of the heads of certain matters the work is intended to contain. At the same time I would request that you should exercise your judgment freely upon all that is presented, and form your own opinion rather than use that of another, making as many allowances as you can for the defects you will inevitably discover, and remember if you please, that the writer is a painter, and one who does not take up the pen *in the place* of the pencil, but resumes the one when he can no longer continue the use of the other, and that even the *leisure* of a man pursuing an arduous profession, like air which has already served the purpose of respiration, loses something of its freshness and elasticity.

Thus much by way of preface and apology.

As I have said, my grand object in bringing forward this work is to open a source of information on the subject of the arts of design, and to attempt the cultivation and refinement of the public taste. Under these two heads may be ranged almost all that the work is intended to embrace. You will ask, perhaps, Are there no such sources of information open to the public? Alas! if I am obliged to reply in the spirit in which it is asserted this work will be conducted, I must honestly confess I do not believe there is a single one to be found.\* I will tell you the reason for this. Nothing that is offered in the way of instruction or comment is derived from men whose knowledge is of a learned and practical character combined. The only efficient information which can be offered or obtained must come from the painter. I may even go a step farther than this, and assert that to teach what is desirable, it is not enough to possess the requisite knowledge, without, at the same time, having a real and unfeigned interest in communicating it. You will, perhaps, be disposed to ask, Are all

\* It would be highly unjust not to make an exception in favour of a monthly periodical entitled the Art-Union, a work which has been called into existence within the last four years, is full of good feeling towards art and artists, and is ably and independently conducted by its editor.

the works which have appeared, and been produced by such men as Reynolds, Barry, Fuseli, Opie, Shee, and others, useless? I answer certainly not; and offer as a reason, that they are the production of artists. I am convinced of the great utility of such works, and am certain that if a legislative enactment could be made to enforce the reading of them once a quarter in every family in the United Kingdom, that a most essential service would be rendered to the cause of art, IF, before that were done, the public could be prepared for their reception by an appropriate education.

In the present condition of things, the grand drawback upon the efficiency of these writers is, they address themselves to the painter, the *dilettante*, and the man of taste; and thus they are above the comprehension of the general and indifferent reader.

You will perhaps wish to know what is my opinion of the literature of the day relative to matters of art, and what I think of the effusions and criticisms of the public press generally, and perhaps be disposed to believe that I regard all such as utterly useless to the interests of art. You are mistaken: I consider both as instruments favourable to the project to which this work is devoted; and I am delighted to see not only a greater number of pens employed, but also that artists *even* are slowly rousing themselves, and applying their strength where it is so much wanting. I witness with sincere satisfaction the appearance of every stray essay that falls under my notice and other effusions on the subject of art which I at once know come from the hand of the painter, and I make certain of the good they will produce. As the cause of such men is my cause too I hasten to join them; and as I see the deficiency of their force, and the vantage ground which ignorance and bad taste have taken, I am the more desirous to plant a battery, to protect if possible the possessions their prowess have won from the enemy, and, as their numbers are small, to join them with the most efficient force I can muster. As to the utility of the writers of the public press, I am disposed to regard that as a matter of far greater importance than is generally assigned to it, and worthy of much consideration as a valuable adjunct in the cause of art.

It has been too much the practice with artists to look upon newspaper criticism with indifference or disdain; to attach too much importance to it in one way and too little in another, and to form a false estimate of its influence. While some have depended upon it for reputation, others have treated it with contempt, regarding it as feeble, faulty, and utterly worthless. Unconscious of their own supineness, artists are too apt to overlook the advantages derived merely from the *activity* of the press, in the bare notice it affords of the productions of art, to say nothing of its capability of judging correctly occasionally by the force of natural taste alone, and that this activity has been the means of keeping alive a subject which might, for any thing they themselves have done, have fallen a dead letter. Considered in another way, it must appear unreasonable and unjust to accuse those of ignorance who have had no opportunity of gaining information, whether

this be applied to the public generally or to any particular class of men. It is not to be overlooked that no more has been done to inform those who write upon art than those who are called upon to judge of its merits, to patronise its productions, and to respect its professors, while great obligations are due to both. The public press will ever be a grand ally in the cause of art, if only as affording that excitement which all matters of human interest require to keep them alive, let its judgment be ever so feeble or faulty.

The reader will therefore see that none of these agencies are rejected, held in disdain, or considered useless; but they cannot be regarded as affording that information on which the interests and advancement of art and the cultivation and refinement of taste depend.

One important function in the grand plan of this work will consist in furnishing the information necessary for a just comprehension of art, from its highest attributes to its most subordinate merits. This will be attempted in various modes, and by a variety of devices and illustrations. It will embrace a full, clear, and comprehensive system of instruction applicable to the condition of every class of students, including the philosophy of pictorial representation, the various attributes and characters of the several departments of art, its theory and principle, its mechanical processes and practical details.

There is another important particular that will never be lost sight of in this work, which is to put the reader in possession of those facts and particulars with which a painter necessarily becomes acquainted in the course of his practice, to comment upon them certainly, but in most cases to leave the deduction to the good sense of the reader. This work is taken up under a full conviction that it is possible to put the reader into full possession of a knowledge of art, even as regards the more speculative and abstruse particulars, by the assistance of his good sense only. It has been too much the practice hitherto to treat all persons out of the pale of the profession as incapable of comprehending the mysteries of art. Reynolds, and Barry, and Northcote, and others complain of this absurd practice, and all declare that the deepest mysteries of art can all be simplified and made accessible to common intelligence and good sense.

You have now, most courteous Reader, to be informed of another function, the exercise of which this work proposes to itself, and which may be considered of a more important character than that which has been already explained. I must introduce it to your notice by a few prefatory remarks.

If we view mankind but as one grand mass of students, and divide them into two classes—those who are labouring to KNOW, and those who are learning to DO—we shall discover a striking disparity in certain particulars of their several conditions. We shall see that the most extraordinary pains have been taken to assist the one, and that little or nothing has been done to aid and direct the other. Supposing these two grand departments of human acquisition to be ranked

under the names of KNOWLEDGE and TASTE, you will perceive that the one has been cultivated with unceasing assiduity and pushed to the utmost extent, fortified with abundant facts, and made secure in the most elaborate and satisfactory deductions, while the department of taste has been and remains still utterly neglected.

Now whether you incline to the opinion that the one is practicable ground and the other not; that the field of knowledge affords space and promise, and is sure to produce fruit, and to make an ample return for the labour bestowed upon it, while that of taste is uncertain, and may be left to its own spontaneous production; you will at least not dispute the proposition I have put forward, or deny the fact that, from some cause or other, the one is well cultivated and fertile, the other neglected and sterile.

This is sufficient for my present purpose; and you will learn from what is here advanced what it is intended, upon future occasions, to elaborate and prove.

You will farther, perhaps, wish to know how a knowledge of the arts of design are calculated to exert an influence upon taste generally, and how the principles of the one are connected with those of the other. I must beg of you here to be satisfied with the only answer I can at present afford you, which is, that the proof you require is just the task I propose to execute upon some future occasion.

Taste is a subject which, it appears to me, has received but little just consideration, and is rarely spoken of but as one upon which people have agreed to dispute, and never to come to an adjustment of their differences. It is clear that taste is either intuitive or educational: if the first, all attempts to communicate it must be useless; if the last, it is to be taught and learned. If the inquiry being left in a condition at once unsettled and unsatisfactory affords any reasonable plea for its being submitted to farther investigation, there is ample encouragement for setting about it. It may be remarked, *en passant*, that we acknowledge the existence of objects of taste and men of taste. The first possess the attributes, and the last the requisite powers for judging of them: tests are applied which decide whether those objects have really these attributes or not, and whether those who judge apply them correctly or not; but it appears to be believed that there are no principles which can be used as guides in either case!

It is too much to assume the importance of a discovery in such a matter; but if really men can be taught to judge of productions, which are acknowledged to be the proper and the highest objects of taste, and the principles can be pointed out and clearly defined upon which these productions are formed, and upon which their excellence rests, and by which they are judged and valued, it will appear at least extraordinary that the study is entirely neglected and abandoned as hopeless or useless.

As a passing remark perhaps you will allow me to say, that I think, in the education generally of the day, I perceive a strong bias towards the cultivation of the KNOWING FACULTIES of the community, and



that there is a proportionate neglect of the culture and exercise of the FEELINGS with which the human creation is endowed by nature. As a painter perhaps I have very little to do with this, other than that as far as art addresses itself to the sensibilities of man it fails in proportion as these are defective; and that as a man I have a natural desire to see my species as perfect as possible. Altogether I must tell you, although I lay no very great stress upon the matter, that I am disposed to regard art, if perfectly brought into play, as a powerful auxiliary in a cause which, it appears to me, stands at this time greatly in want of support.

I have now put you in possession of the two grand objects of my work. I call them two for distinction's sake, but you will see they apply directly to one end, namely, to cultivate a knowledge and a taste for works of art.

Being fully aware that no work can be efficiently useful and instructive which is tedious, and that mere didactic matter is too apt to assume that character, the Editor, with a view of diversifying and relieving the matter, and of giving a more popular character to the work, proposes giving—

An Account of his Four Years' Residence in Italy, which will embrace his opinions of the principal works of ancient art now remaining; the present condition of art in Italy and the Continent generally; his thoughts on the practice of sending students to Rome for study; the character of students, habits, &c. He will notice many picturesque localities, and attempt some descriptions of the scenes, character and customs of the Italians.

With the same object some lighter matter will be introduced, under the title of Gossipings with a Painter, which will probably embrace some of the topics and passing occurrences of the day, connected with the general object of the work.

Anecdotes of Art and of Artists.

An Inquiry into the Causes which have advanced or retarded the progress of Art.

An Investigation of the Merits of ancient and modern Art.

A View of the present Condition of foreign and native Art.

Application of the fine to the mechanical and ornamental Arts.

Artistical Knowledge identified with the general Improvement in Matters of Taste.

Reviews of Works connected with Art.

An original Hypothesis of Beauty.

An Essay (in parts) on Taste.

Illustrations connected with the subject in hand will occasionally be given; they will not be elaborate, but of an artistical rather than a popular kind.

As the plan put forth for the decoration of the new houses of parliament constitutes a subject of general interest, and is a matter of the first importance to the arts of England, a series of articles, forming a complete essay, will be given, under the title of A Glance at the

contemplated Adornment of the New Houses of Parliament, most respectfully addressed to the Gentlemen of her Majesty's Commission.

Thus much I can promise you, courteous Reader, because thus much depends upon myself; but what else you will get is a little uncertain, since it will depend upon others. I ought, perhaps, to apologise for addressing you with the egotistical first person singular, instead of the editorial plural; but there is something in my case which may act as a palliative in so grave an offence against custom.

My condition at the present moment is that of sole representative of the mighty, mysterious, and magniloquent WE—projector, proprietor, author, editor, contributor, revisor, &c. of this work, which my publishers will insist upon calling a magazine, a title too important for a work of such inconsiderable magnitude. Neither am I quite content to call it the *Artist and Amateur's Magazine*, for I am aware that there exists a vulgar proverb about "teaching one's granna to suck eggs," which may be thrown in my teeth, and which I disclaim deserving on the score of any intentions I possess. Perhaps in time the work may better deserve the title; if it does not I promise you it shall not be my fault. It is true when I look around me, and contemplate my table loaded with a confused mass of bundles of papers, of all hues and dates, some daubed with paint, stained with oil, without "smelling of the lamp," and scrawled over with figures and strange characters meant for writing, often executed with the palette in one hand and the pen in the other, and hard to decipher,—when I cast my eyes round and behold a host of canvasses strained upon frames, turned with their faces towards the wall, waiting for certain *daylight* operations, just as their table companions of *night* expectations are expecting theirs,—I cannot help feeling the insufficiency of one head and one pair of hands, and am disposed, although my loneliness by no means depresses me, to regard myself as a kind of literary Robinson Crusoe, without the help of a man Friday, or the consolation even of a parrot!

Pray excuse me for detaining you so long; a solitary man finding a companion is loth to part with him. Farewell, and with the most perfect desire to render myself both useful and agreeable, I remain

Your most devoted and faithful servant,

E. V. RIPPINGILLE.

55. Berners Street, 17th March, 1843.

A  
Glance at the contemplated Pictorial Adornment  
OF  
THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

AN ESSAY IN PARTS,

RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED TO THE GENTLEMEN OF HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSION.

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PART THE FIRST.

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No man who is anxious for the welfare of art can perceive any movement made in its favour, without a feeling of honest exultation and real satisfaction.

The amateur of art and the man of taste will be gratified to find so important a matter as the advancement of art under the consideration of men who hold the first rank in society, the highest grade in taste, and who possess at the same time the most ample means of carrying into effect whatever their good feeling and good sense may suggest. But whatever the intelligent, the worthy, and the wealthy may anticipate, it is the artist alone who knows what may be achieved by efforts and means appropriate and properly directed.

Any artist who will look back to the period when art could scarcely find footing in this country, and, if not looked upon with disdain, was at least regarded with the coldest apathy, must feel his heart stirred with a peculiar sensation in witnessing the change which has been produced, and hail with delight the new proofs which are now offered to him of an increase of that feeling and respect for art to which its advancement is fairly to be attributed.

As the productions of art have become better understood, and the talents and efforts by which they are created have been more justly appreciated, the intellectual claims as well as the social condition of the producers have been raised to comparative importance. The artist no longer is regarded as a mere mechanic; and, if no higher considerations are conceded to him, it is still something to be a producer of those things which men of the highest intelligence and the most refined acquirements regard with fondness and respect.

The artist must feel, as his memory goes back to the past and his mind contemplates the future, as he reverts to the dreams of his youthful ardour, or to the rational expectations of his experience, as he has formed projects of improvement and of excellence, that he has not done more perhaps than *imagine* a scheme analogous to the advantages of that which the present holds out to him.

If to pursue his art and to seek honour in it are motives which have power to move an artist, independent of worldly gain or the *prestige* of artificial and unreal distinctions, he has now *that* which he most ardently desires! If there be propriety and sense in those plans contrived and suggested by men who have thought deeply upon the subject, and who have the good of art at heart, the substance of what they have imagined and planned is now offered, and remains only to be tried and proved.

In reflecting upon the present state of art, the difficulties by which it is beset, and the circumstances most favourable to its advancement, public patronage has been considered, demanded, and insisted upon as the only means by which art could step from its humble condition into that which exalts it as an object, and fits it as a means of national honour. However noble and profuse private patronage may be, it has been regarded as too limited for the vaulting ambition of art. It has been by the patronage of the state, it is believed, that the nations of antiquity have produced and reared those great men by which their renown, and in some cases their very existence, has been made known to us. That patronage which is considered so important, which has been so loudly demanded and so long delayed, is at last offered to the artists of Great Britain; and it remains to be seen in what spirit the occasion will be met, and the advantages laid hold of, by the profession at large, but particularly by those who have been loudest in calling for government patronage, and lamenting the absence of it, as a grand cause of the subordinate character of British art.

The project is one of the highest importance; and the execution of it will constitute an experiment worthy of a great nation and an enlightened people, while the occasion itself will put to the test some favourite theories, and the event ever be referred to as a memorable epoch in art.

Whatever may be the general or particular opinion of the plan proposed for giving encouragement to the arts of this country by means of the decoration of the houses of parliament, and no doubt there is a diversity, it must be admitted that *this is the thing*, — the long talked of and the so much desired occasion which artists have contemplated for advancing, refining, and ennobling the condition of art.

Among those even who are not sufficiently sanguine to look for the complete fulfilment of *all* that is anticipated, there are very few indeed who would not wish to see the experiment tried, whilst all, without exception, must feel anxious that it may succeed.

As a grand national experiment, however, it is not to be entered upon without the closest investigation of all that is connected with the subject, and of examining in every possible way, so as to make certain that the means about to be employed are adequate to the intended end. Without this it were certainly unwise to proceed, and irrational to expect that the results should be satisfactory.

Independent of the necessity of having the most ample information to proceed upon, it might not be amiss to look a little into those cir-

cumstances and causes which have been known to interfere with and defeat the best intentions in undertakings of similar character and importance with that in question, and which, unfortunately, have often been betrayed by the results, and made known when it was too late to apply a remedy. It will not be necessary to look far for precedents, since there is scarcely any public work, from the building an academy to the erection of a monument, that will not furnish them. The inquiry is not to be entered upon here, but it is by no means to be overlooked; and, by connecting it with the matter in hand, it may be rendered both serviceable and important.

That the plan proposed by the Commission appointed by her Majesty has not given universal satisfaction is no evidence of its being defective; and after all that has been said upon it, nothing better has been proposed, so that it may be regarded, perhaps, as the best that can be recommended and adopted. If it does not meet every exigency of the case, it at least provides some new and untried facilities, which may possibly be turned to account.

Agreeable to the statement put forth, it is the avowed object of the Commission to offer "encouragement, not only to the highest but to every subordinate branch of the Fine Arts." The plan, therefore, now before the public is evidently but a part only of the whole grand project, and has relation to works in fresco only. It is therefore not meeting the proposals which are offered with proper respect, either to criticise them too closely, or to show dissatisfaction and a want of confidence in the efficiency of the whole scheme. It is with a full impression and dependence upon this fact, and not in any degree with the feelings or opinions of any party, that this address is penned, — with a hope that it will contribute in some slight degree to awaken attention, and lead to a better understanding of certain particulars upon which there appears a deficiency of information.

In a grand national work, which is intended to remain a monument of the talent of the country, it is evidently desirable to adopt such a plan of operation as will give a full and free scope to the collective and individual powers of every aspirant who can reasonably be brought to bear a part and take a share in the honour of that which is to be achieved; and any schemewhich does not embrace this completely and provide for every casualty must of necessity be partial and faulty.

It becomes a natural question then to inquire whether the scheme proposed is of this character; or in what particular it falls short and is defective.

The opinions of men differ so widely, and are so modified by peculiar circumstances and conditions, that, abstracted from the real and positive facts, they are uncertain guides to a just and fair conclusion.

Reasoning upon and adhering strictly to the facts it will be seen that there are but two modes which can well be adopted.

The one is, to choose ARTISTS who shall be considered equal to the task proposed; the other, to choose WORKS which shall be considered eligible for the object intended.



Now, if this power of choice be delegated to any body of men for the purpose of exercising it, it must appear evident and undeniable that in either and both cases it will be but the same power acting in different ways—in the one case it will be the choice of men, in the other the choice of pictures.

It then becomes a question as to which method is the better to adopt, which function the easier to exercise, and the least likely to be fallacious!

If it be asserted that the artists who have made their way to prominent situations in their profession are the persons indicated and pointed out as those proper to be chosen, it cannot be maintained that this circumstance serves as an infallible guide. It may be maintained that amongst them some of the desirable parties are to be found; but who is to make the selection who is to be taken and who left?

Here at once is a dilemma which involves many difficulties.

If artists alone are to be chosen who are known, — a qualification which *may* arise from long standing in their profession or from other circumstances by which they have been thrust into notice, either through or independent of their merits, — it is clear that such a mode of proceeding would effectually exclude the unknown.

If even it be admitted that the probabilities are strongly in favour of the supposition that the talented persons in art are all known, which is a reasonable plea, considering the long preparation and practice which the attainment of excellence demands, during which the character of an artist's qualification will in all probability transpire, and taking into consideration that there are no precocious instances of excellence in art as in poetry, music, and some branches of science, yet this is far from being conclusive, and is not to be depended upon.

It is not enough, then, that men are known to consider them as qualified, nor that they are unknown to rank them among the incapable and to reject them.

Some better and more certain plan than this is therefore to be desired and adopted.

Looking at but one side of the question, and taking the bare facts and results of decisions made in cases of competition, it cannot be denied that the plan proposed is highly objectionable and unpromising.

Viewed in this way, the ultimate success of the whole project appears at best uncertain.

We are not to look at the matter in theory, but as it has in nine cases out of ten been found in practice. Theoretically, a scheme of competition appears the most fair and reasonable that can possibly be devised; but, in order to secure its perfect operation, it is necessary to find a competent tribunal.

It would be useless to enter upon the investigation of such a scheme by taking to pieces that complicated machine man, with all his motives, passions, prejudices, wants, and weaknesses; it is enough simply to refer to the almost entire amount of cases which have been decided upon competition, and say if more than a solitary instance occurring

now and then can be referred to as one in which the decision was just, impartial, and satisfactory.

It is not enough that under certain circumstances, and with certain modifications, the results in certain cases have been more or less agreeable with the desired end; it is undeniable that they have ever been notoriously uncertain.

Admitting such to be the case, a startling question at once presents itself. Is it judicious to leave *that* which is no less than matter of national honour or disgrace to be determined by *that* which has ever been found notoriously uncertain?

Taking the same view of the plan proposed, it may be said that it appears far better that the nation should avail itself of what it is known to possess than to seek what is required from talent which is yet to be discovered.

The adoption of measures which shall include both involve many difficulties, so that a scheme which is unobjectionable in every particular is unattainable. In such a dilemma the closest investigation, the most ample information, and the most deliberate consideration are necessary.

The life of every artist who has made his way to eminence has been as it were one continued course of competition. His eminence is a proof of his having been already tested and compared with others, and of his having succeeded where his competitors have failed.

If the important character of the ordeal through which he has passed be considered, it will readily appear that his merits have already been tried by a tribunal of a far higher character (namely, that of the public at large) than any particular one which can be summoned for the occasion.

It will not be questioned that a long course of proof, one which has brought forth an ample and varied store of examples, affords a far better test of a man's powers than one single specimen, under whatever circumstances it may be produced.

A man who is really eminent has been made so by the peculiar fitness of his mind, and the adaptation of his studies to their proper objects; his superiority is therefore not fortuitous, and neither grudgingly bestowed nor envied, but, on the contrary, he takes possession of his rank as a matter of right, to which none else have a claim. His station excites no envy among his peers; they wish to support him; to pull him down would be to weaken the aristocracy of their order. The place held by such a man may be considered as assigned to him by nature, while to others a similar rank and importance in different ways have been given; and every really eminent man in art occupies a situation, if his merits are really understood, which another cannot fill.

If men are considered in this way competition between them appears at once in its true light — unnatural, impossible, or, as the good sense of the world has agreed in denouncing comparisons, odious.

At no time and in no country has art been so widely diversified as in this. Here it has been left free to take its own course: the conse-

quence is that men are to be found who have made great proficiency in every department. The most successful scheme of patronage will be that which will assign to each his proper task, while nothing can be hoped for which will bring artists in collision with each other, or that attempts to make them act in unison: both, from a clear and evident cause, are utterly impracticable.

Competition, under certain conditions, is in effect to submit to comparison things which cannot be compared: a scheme of competition therefore, in the view which has been taken of it, may well be regarded but as a partial and imperfect measure, if adopted as the *sole* means of accomplishing the end in contemplation.

Considering the compromising character of competition, it would not be surprising if artists who stand at the head of their profession should refuse to submit to the decision of a tribunal in which by mere accident a slur may be cast upon their reputation; and that those who are at the head should deny the power of any tribunal to judge them is reasonable enough.

Thus it will appear that the services of men whose abilities are known and acknowledged may be lost in the search for those who have yet to win their way to public notice and respect.

It may, however, still be a serious and important question, whether it would not be better to submit to the chance of being wronged rather than run the risk of marring the first grand movement which has ever been made in this country in favour of the noblest attributes and the best interests of art.

Although, as has been shown by the view which has been taken, there are many objections, there is still much in favour of the mode proposed for deciding upon the merits of artists by competition: and there is this important consideration to be added, that the tribunal will be formed of men animated with the spirit which has given rise to the project, the highest praise that can be offered them, and altogether above the shadow of a suspicion of acting unfairly. They may err certainly, and upon this alone rests the grand objection to the scheme of competition.

Whatever may be urged against the mode proposed, it has at least one grand claim to consideration, which, if it had no other, would entitle it to respect, and which is highly honourable to the parties with whom it has originated. By competition many artists will have a chance at least afforded them, whilst by any other method not the shadow of such chance would have fallen to their lot. It is self-evident, as has been said, that if commissions were given to those artists only who are already known and before the public, the unknown and those who have not yet made their appearance—those that are held back by circumstances, supposing there are any such—would have had nothing, who have now both the opportunity and the temptation to come forward.

Looking impartially at the scheme proposed, which it is the grand object of this essay to do, without pronouncing judgment upon it, it

cannot be overlooked that beyond this evil there are others greatly to be dreaded, and which every possible precaution ought to be taken to avoid.

Were authority to be given to one man, or to a committee of men, to search for and find out the artists best fitted for the execution of the task proposed to them, who is it likely would be chosen? The men, most certainly, who by talent, luck, or intrigue, have obtained the most prominent positions in the profession. In this way it would happen that the good, the bad, and the indifferent would obtain employment, while those upon whom neither honours nor distinctions have fallen, whether talented or otherwise, would be utterly overlooked.

By what species of human omniscience is it possible that any individual could know of the existence even of many talented persons in art, admitting that there is every disposition to do them the most ample justice? and what number of individuals would it be necessary to congregate, who should be able to name and to include *all* the talented artists who exist in the community?

It is admitted that in many cases of competition, in which men sit in judgment upon the merits of certain matters submitted to the test of their approval, that still a feeble or a false estimate is formed, and that fallacy and wrong are the consequences. It is equally certain that similar results attend the exercise of collective or individual judgment in cases where the mere pretensions of men are put forward instead of their works, and a decision is formed upon their presumed capabilities. It is clear from what occurs that in both cases there is a *possibility* of error. Now it should seem that the chances are more in favour of the former than of the latter mode for this reason, that it appears easier to judge of the merits of works submitted to examination than of the merits of men; and the force of this apparent facility is very much increased when it is taken into consideration that the authors of the works are unknown, and that it is impossible to regard men devoid of some slight bias for or against.

A slight examination of the subject will show us that many difficulties are attendant upon the latter method, and fewer upon the former.

To put the matter in a clearer light, it is only necessary to suppose a series of designs executed and brought together, intended to illustrate a variety of defined and specified subjects. Then let it be asked, whether would it be easier to decide justly upon these, or to go forth into the world of art to pick out men in the profession capable of executing such subjects.

It will be seen at once, that, in order to qualify the searcher for his task, you must imbue him with a tolerably profound knowledge of the art — his perceptions must enable him to look prospectively into the resources, not only of the artist, but the art itself. He must be able to go to the extent of what the painter of the *best* work has gone, otherwise he cannot choose between one and another. If he can go as far

as the painter, he must be equal to him in art; and, if the painter has not gone farther in what he has done than an uninstructed person could go, he is but a shallow artist.

A single case is always more favourable to illustration than a host in conjunction. We will therefore suppose that the subject required is the Feast of Belshazzar, and we will suppose two modes resorted to for the purpose of procuring the best designs for this subject, the one CHOICE BY COMPETITION, the other CHOICE BY COMMISSION (as we will call it). We will say that there are fifty specimens offered, in which the subject is passed through the minds and hands of as many artists. Each, as a matter of course, is led to think it over, to examine it in all its bearings and capabilities; each resorts to the most ingenious and striking expedients he can find for telling his story forcibly and clearly. He then studies how he can best bring the peculiar powers of his art to bear upon the object and end he has in view. For this purpose he not only reflects and contrives, but he resorts to the aid of experiment, and not only reasons and resolves what to do, with the full force of his talents and experience, aided by principles long known, tried, and established, but he resorts to experiments, and will not disdain to take hints from processes and the very tools he employs, often turning mere accidents to account.

Now can it be for a moment supposed that a subject elaborated in this way, and thus studied and produced in fifty different instances, will not embrace more excellencies of every possible kind and character, than any one individual can anticipate, particularly when such individual has never made the matter a serious study, or given but little time and attention to it!

Such a supposition is preposterous; and the thing stands clearly before us, if we think but for a moment, and ask ourselves the question, Can a committee of men or an individual, who cannot judge correctly of a set of designs, possibly judge of the qualifications of artists who are to be looked for and selected as capable of executing such designs?

As has been said, in both cases it is but the same power employed and exercised in different ways; but in judging of the thing produced the exercise of such power is comparatively easy; in judging of the capabilities of men for the production of this thing the task is difficult and dangerous.

Again, there is another matter which ought to be considered, and which renders *choice by commission* still farther difficult. It is not always conclusive to judge of men by the precise character of the works they are accustomed to produce, since many are compelled to follow a branch of art as little consonant with their own inclinations, and perhaps even their natural fitness, as calculated to reflect honour upon themselves and their country.

These are clearly objections to this mode of procuring works by commission; and there are still others, which it is unpleasant to refer to and to name. It is impossible to shut our eyes to the fact, that without a shadow of suspicion of unfair play, personal considerations



will unavoidably have their weight ; and that the strongest minds and the most determined integrity can never be entirely free from their influence.

In order to insure the most perfect success, it is of the utmost importance that the specimen sent in should be of a character which will afford a sufficient test of the powers of the artist, and furnish ample grounds upon which to form a judgment. Perhaps it is a defect in the proposed plan, that this last consideration has not been fully provided for.

A mere designer in outline, or in *chiaro-scuro*, can do nothing more than display a portion only of the talent necessary for a complete work. It must be admitted, however, that it is the best portion of a painter's qualifications — that portion which, in modern art, has been almost entirely neglected by the artist ; and as little cared for, sought after, or appreciated, by the public.

The scheme has another high recommendation, in as much as it is calculated to compel the artist to turn to the resources of his own mind, and his powers of invention, to bring out whatever of feeling or thought belongs to him, and to rouse him from his habits of trusting entirely to the resources of his palette.

In several of the most important particulars, therefore, the project which has been got up, and made known to the public, appears to be the best that could possibly be devised ; and, whilst it reflects the highest honour upon those with whom it has originated, it calls for the display of the most strenuous exertions on the part of the profession, to meet and support it with warmth and energy. There are objections of a minor character, which, perhaps, are scarcely worth notice when properly considered, and which may be readily met by very simple expedients.

It is said, and with some truth, that the cartoon which is demanded by the Commission, and upon which a judgment of the merits of the artist will be formed, offers but an inadequate test of the capabilities of the aspirant for the required and complete work.

It is an undoubted fact, that there are some artists to be found, who are capable of making a sketch in outline, or a finished drawing in black and white, who are utterly incompetent to the compound difficulties of a finished picture.

There are, however, two remarkable facts connected with this, and which, taken either separately or together, tend strongly to invalidate the most plausible part of the objection.

One of these is, that in this country, far less than in any other, is it likely to pitch upon men of this incomplete character as artists, since art has here been studied and pursued after a manner which has a directly contrary tendency. Those qualities of art which have been most successfully and generally cultivated amongst us are, *chiaro-scuro*, colour, and effect ; in a word, we are *picture-makers*, and not draftsmen.

There can be but little danger, therefore, that any cartoon sent in,

which may possess sufficient merit to entitle it to serious consideration, can be the production of an artist who is not competent to complete it as a picture.

The other fact is still a more weighty and important one. That which is required of the artist, as a test of his qualification, is by far the better and the larger portion of what it is required to produce; and is fully and completely competent to afford evidence of the highest powers employed in the exercise of art, and of that ability which ought to decide the rank and importance of its possessor.

If there be any one circumstance which affords a just idea of the good sense and good taste, as well as the good feeling made manifest in the project of the Commission, it is that which calls on the artists of England to depart from their old habits, and begin the exercise of their minds rather than their hands. Giving the commission credit for a just conception of a great and comprehensive plan for benefiting the arts of the country, for aiming a wholesome corrective at the malpractices of artists, and for curbing suddenly and effectively the current of popular taste; no measures, devised by the profoundest synod of true knowledge and taste, could possibly have been more efficient, and better adapted to their purpose.

This alone is sufficient to inspire a confidence in the whole scheme, and to give promise of results at once honourable and satisfactory.

This is, in effect, saying to artists: We acknowledge your merits in certain departments of your art. In the imitation of objects and effects you have shown great talent, and in the choice and management of them great intelligence and good taste. If we view your works, and consider them but as the fixed and permanent images of beautiful things, your productions assume a high character, and your exertions are entitled to honour and praise. Nature has not offered you her stores in vain, she has been pleased with your devotion, and you have been rewarded with success. We have learned to understand what you have offered to us, and you have not been without recompense. We have admitted the merit of your execution, and learned to wonder at representations "without form and void," works divested of the marks of the instruments by which they were performed, at the sleight of hand by which objects have been made to look real and living, at the arrangements of colours which glow with the clear brilliancy of a gem; we have been pleased with textures which disown the palette, with hues unconscious of the colourman's shop and effects, unknown to mere pigments of earth. We have entered into your feelings, and have learned to be pleased even with "a nice bit of colour," with varied textures, clear shadows, and a sharp touch; let that suffice for the present. In short, we have learned to enjoy, as long and as far as you can reasonably desire we should, the mere work of your *hands*, and we now wish to see what can be produced by the labour of your *heads*. To speak plainly, we begin to suspect that our satisfaction has acted as a damper upon your exertions, instead of a spur; so that you are becoming a little insensible to the higher calls of your art, and con-

tent to produce those things which have a reference rather to the present than the future. Indeed, we begin to think somewhat less of our own judgment and taste, and to set a lighter value upon a kind of commodity which, from its general character, we now see can be produced by almost any body. We are sufficiently well acquainted with your art to know the value of the tricks of the palette, but we cannot believe that the whole art of painting consists in them. In a word, you have carried this sort of thing far enough, perhaps a little too far. We admit you are very expert mechanics, let us see what you are in the better parts of your art.

We now wish to throw you upon the resources of your minds; to ask you to turn to the stores of your imaginations, and the creative faculties of your souls; to appeal to your feelings, and the collective force of your past experience, and your present impressions. Let us see of what you are capable.

Let us see what choice you will make out of the wide-extended range of subjects offered to you, how you will conceive the subject you undertake; what you will do to render it generally intelligible; what you will add in the way of illustration, either in incident or episode; and in what way you will avail yourself of the peculiar resources of your art. Whether you will give just and appropriate action to the figures you employ, clothe them with the varied character of nature, light them up with expression, and animate them with life and intelligence. Let us see whether you will embellish and enrich, or weaken and impoverish, your subject; whether it will come from your hands more full, clear, and complete than it was left by its author; or whether you will treat it as a mere matter of fact, and so leave it—a mere translation from the common into the peculiar language of your art.

Let us see whether you will give us the mere attitudes and looks of your academical studies; or afford us the evidence, which we shall test by our feelings, if not our judgment, that you have gone to nature for them, directed by an impulse she herself has given you.

Let us see that you do not trust to mere mechanical accuracy of drawing, or attempt to make it pass for more than it is worth; nor suppose that mere attitude, and a display of muscles, will stand in the place of appropriate action.

Remember that, in the representation of human creatures, it is *humanity* which is above all other qualities essential, indispensable, and difficult. That it is not the material man we want, but the intellectual; not man acting by the agency of his bones and muscles, but under the influence of his mental faculties, his reason, passions, and impulses. For the object we have in view, a mere outline or a well-studied drawing will serve as well as a finished picture, and furnish you with a task which will be comparatively easy, inasmuch as it will embrace but a portion of the difficulties of your art. We offer you a task which will allow you to show us that you can think and feel as men, giving you credit for what you have and are able to perform as artists.

## EXHIBITION AT THE BRITISH GALLERY.

ALTHOUGH comparisons are held proverbially odious, they are nevertheless the tests by which most things are learned and distinguished, whether these things be objects of the senses or subjects of the thoughts. A person therefore in the condition of the writer, who for a few years past has seen none but the *expositions* of foreign countries, on returning to his own, very naturally falls into the exercise of this odious faculty, setting in array his past impressions against those of the present. Viewed and considered in this way, the exhibition of the works of the artist now exhibiting at the British Gallery, appears highly exhilarating and satisfactory. There is one striking peculiarity which manifests itself at first sight, and which distinguishes the artists of this country from their brothers on the Continent. It is this: art on the Continent appears to be exercised by men made up almost entirely by study, and who, in the best they do, present but the aspect of mere imitators — imitators of what all intelligent observers have seen infinitely better done over and over again. In England the case is entirely different. Whether the attempts we see be of a high or an inferior order of art, one which already has a prototype or is of a novel character, the artists by whom such works are executed appear as men peculiarly gifted by nature for the branch of art they have adopted; and, however inferior, they appear to hold a place which no other members of the profession could fill. As for imitators there is scarcely one to be found in the whole range of the profession.

No doubt these several conditions in the practitioners of art, native and foreign, are to be explained by a reference to the circumstances under which each is placed; the singularity of the fact is, that it remains unnoticed.

However faulty and perverse the English artist may show himself, it is rare indeed that he appears feeble; in his most outrageous productions he shows his capabilities, and, if you cannot applaud him for making the best use of his faculties, you cannot deny him the possession of them; even where you cannot approve his judgment, you are not called upon to look with pity on his weakness. If in the misapplication of his strength, the hurry of his thoughts, and the hasty dash of his hand, you find but little to commend, he does not beseech you to look with complacency upon an achievement which evidences nothing but long laborious and abortive toil, powers miscalculated, and time misspent. You will still feel that he is capable of something better, and not that in the production before you he had done his best.

Whatever may be considered the errors of English art, it is impossible, except by the grossest perversion of the truth, to charge them to the account of imbecility. The faults, perhaps, are those of the times and circumstances rather than the men, and are more the effect

of the prevailing taste of the public, than the result of incapacity or inclination in the painters.

That we should possess no artists who practise the higher branches of art is much to be regretted; but it is not to be overlooked that, in the place of this, we possess many excellences which go far to soften our disappointment, and which we should not possess were the talents now so widely diversified and employed all diverted into one channel. This it is which in the modern schools of the Continent produces such abundant mediocrity, so many of those abortive attempts which are utterly distasteful to a general and healthy appetite for the varied fruits of art. Perhaps it is full as much to be regretted that, by the influence of a certain liking for a peculiar character of art (not to call it taste, for that implies intelligence, knowledge, and feeling, but a prevailing opinion as to the kind of art which ought to be practised), artists should be drawn in, whether fitted by nature or not, to attempt that in which only a few can succeed, as that it should be neglected altogether.

As well might this country attempt to grow pine-apples as it does turnips, and, continuing to lament the unproductiveness of the soil, throw away peaches, nectarines, apples, pears, plums, cherries, and the rest of our common productions, as utterly worthless.

A man need not fear being considered entirely destitute of sense and taste, who, in spite of all the learned *vapouring* by which he is surrounded, still continues to prefer even a good pumpkin to a bad pine-apple.

It is singular that, in the general criticism of the day, this peculiarity of British art remains unnoticed, since it demands but the shallowest acquaintance with the subject to perceive it. And it can scarcely be supposed that men who think the art worthy of the labour of their pen purposely overlook it, particularly as most of those who write must be inwardly conscious of their want of the necessary information, and the odium that a display of ignorance brings upon them, to be careless about adding a charge of unfairness to the rest. It is common, in this day, for men of all degrees of intelligence to visit the Continent; and, as a matter of course, exhibitions of modern as well as ancient art will fall under their notice. Let an intelligent person take the present or any other exhibition, and compare it with the hapless inanities of art, the tame, insipid, laboured, and lifeless attempts he has seen, and then look at the rudest example he will find upon the walls of this or any exhibition room in England.

Look even to subject alone, to say nothing of the mode of treatment and the manner of execution. Those chosen by the English artist commonly exhibit a healthy, natural, novel, and pleasing variety; while those generally adopted by their Continental brethren display an obsolete, morbid, hackneyed, unwholesome, and not unfrequently a depraved taste; in addition to which the choice of subject, when it does not betray its own weakness, intractability, and an ignorance of the capabilities of art, reminds us only of what we have seen already infinitely better executed and achieved.

If the subjects generally chosen in England are not of a high order according to the common notion, they are at least such as a sensible person may look at with pleasure, and often with advantage, since in many instances the matter of the picture is tributary to the conservation of some of the best feelings of our nature, particularly as a domestic people. This taken in conjunction with the fact that English art in no case exhibits a shadow of immorality or indecency, is a high honour, and may atone in some degree for a want of that dignity so much lamented and so little understood. English artists have the good sense to keep within the bounds of their capabilities in all they attempt: the heaviest charge against them is, that they will not make the best of them, and exert them to the full extent to which they may be carried.

Whatever just cause there may be for lamenting this, whoever has seen much of what is undertaken and performed by artists who strain continually at something beyond their reach, have cause to thank God that the English are not an heroic and history painting nation. No man of the least sense will attempt to set the lower order of objects above the higher, but none but a perverse and mawkish taste would prefer a dead failure, or even a mediocre attempt in high art, to a successful achievement in an inferior branch. The fruit pieces, therefore, in the present exhibition are worth a whole host of attempts, such as one sees commonly in the schools of the Continent, which display only the hopeless imbecility of the aspirant.

The exhibition at the British Gallery is at least rich in the *indication* of talent; and in this particular it leaves all foreign competition far distant. It is however entitled to much higher praise, and to a far nobler distinction than this, since it boasts some specimens which would do honour to any age or country, and which only wait the artificial distinction of time, rarity, and some other circumstances, to give them the importance of many of the highly boasted and justly appreciated works of antiquity.

The weakness of criticism shows itself no where more than in its habit of passing continually unnoticed and unlamented the grand and all-important deficiency of the British and of every other school of modern art—the want of that characteristic by which it is so glaringly distinguished from the ancient—that concentrated intense earnestness of purpose by which a painter collects and grasps all that peculiarly belongs to his subject, and brings the whole force of the powers of his mind and the feelings of heart to bear upon the point he wishes to illustrate, making his picture bear evidence of the *man*, even if it should lack some display of the *painter*. What shall be thought of the painter who neglects and sacrifices the vitality of his subject to some prettiness of art? and what shall be said of the critic who passes such a delinquency unnoticed, or who falls upon such petty achievements as matter for the ambitious display of his critical prowess and taste!

What if the higher branches of art be not practised in this country, the absence of them forms a safe subject of complaint; but an *attempt*

to exercise them neither gives proof of high talent in the artist, nor a perfect taste in those who demand them, since artists *may* exercise them who are utterly deficient in every requisite of their vocation, and men *may* prize them who are altogether devoid of the necessary quality of taste: and again, the direct converse of this position may happen! It is possible that in a very inferior branch of art an artist may display powers which only demand that they should be exercised upon objects worthy of them in order to elevate the artist and his productions to the high honours they deserve. The painter of a picture of the commonest objects of every day life *might* lay claim to that praise which another might seek in vain in the highest and noblest themes of art.

It is not HISTORICAL PAINTING therefore, merely and abstractedly, that is so imperiously called for in this country, but certain of those qualities and excellences in art which give to historical painting its charm and its real claim to superiority, and which it is possible to manifest in many of the subordinate branches. The whole race of English artists might therefore be converted into history painters without elevating the arts of England in the slightest degree. The execution of such a plan, were it possible, would just place us on a level with the artists of the Continent.

There is matter of a far more lamentable a character than the neglect of historical painting in England, which criticism will notice whenever it learns to distinguish a major from a minor evil. The whole force and direction of English art tends to the exercise of mechanical excellences; and while these have been carried to a degree of perfection almost entirely unparalleled in any age or country — while the art of *picture-making* has descended to the mere tyros of the profession, and the public generally have become so satisfied as to look for nothing more, even the master spirits themselves have been gradually seduced from their high aspirations, and have become humbled partakers in a practice which they well know can neither do honour to art or to themselves.

It is the revival of this ambition, for it has existed, and, alas! in many instances, lingered and died in neglect, which is so much desired and wanted, and which alone can give to art that upward tendency and tone which fit it to rank as an object of national glory and honour.

In addition to this it may fairly be questioned whether historical painting is better calculated to produce this peculiar excellence in painters than some inferior branches of art, since the mere demand for it will not create it, and the possession of the power in those who are gifted with it will inevitably lead to the exercise of it.

No style of art will *create* this peculiar excellence — the highest will only afford a medium of its proper and legitimate application.

If it be the object to instruct the mind, to call forth and to cultivate the feelings which are necessary to us as rational and social creatures, it is not always necessary to go to very high examples; that is to say, it is not necessary to call in the aid of deities, demi-gods, kings, and warriors, since it is evident that the hearth has been the theatre

of as much heroism as the battle field; perhaps this truth has been felt by the good sense of the people of England more than by those of any other nation; and to this we may attribute the domestic character of British art.

It is not to be overlooked, and it can only be acknowledged with pain and some humiliation, that the present exhibition boasts nothing progressive, new, or elevated in art — nothing which is calculated to extend the attributes of art, or to excite either thought or feeling: the mere gratification of the sense is apparently all that has been attempted. Of the various mechanical excellences of art there are many examples; but for any new or original subject, striking illustration or incident, we look in vain. Of beautiful transcripts from nature, who affords such a variety that it is impossible to exhaust her boundless stores, there are some, the peculiar growth of our native soil in art — specimens which no other country has produced, and which are not to be found in the whole range of pictorial representation, ancient or modern; they are peculiar to the feelings and the talents of English artists, and not less to that national taste which belongs to the community at large, to which a very important consideration indeed is attached, as it has stood, and still stands, in the place of real knowledge and taste. It is to this knowledge and to this taste that the arts of England owe their present success, and all the advantages and importance that at this hour belong to them. Is it surprising, then, that our exhibitions should boast so many examples of this kind of excellence and so few of that for which there exists neither knowledge or taste? Lamentable indeed is the condition of art, as well as the condition of those who are engaged in its practice, when the very excellence which has been produced by the circumstances and the demands of the occasion is not appreciated — scarcely recognised. It is certainly desirable that examples of a higher character should be called for; it is a proof of an amelioration of the state of knowledge and feeling that they are; but it is still lamentable that in deploring what we *want* we should forget what we *possess*. No person well acquainted with the subject can help feeling that it is worth while to attempt to MEND THE TASTE OF THE COMMUNITY, IF IT IS ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF ELEVATING ITS PATRIOTISM. And here again intrudes an odious comparison. If English art be defective in the mental, the poetic, and the purely imaginative, it is at least on a par with that of any other nation, whilst it is prominent in every other excellence. It is true that our exhibitions boast few subjects of an elevated character, whilst in those of foreign nations a very large proportion are pictures of subjects from Scripture or history, ancient or modern. Those who have a taste for such subjects are naturally gratified in a foreign exhibition, while the same class are disappointed at home; but as to the question of *merit*, that can be easily adjusted, as it hangs simply between those who never TRY and those who make the ATTEMPT.\*

\* A lady visiting the late Stewart Newton remarked in rather a deprecating tone, "Mr. Newton, you are not an historical painter, I believe?" "No Ma'am," was the reply, "but I shall be next week."



If artists in England, and perhaps elsewhere, are not induced to seek subjects in that ample volume which abounds with them, *LIFE*, but must have chapter and verse, according to the good old precedent, for all they do, it is not much to be wondered at; for the very few who *have* devoted themselves to the study, who have searched and found their own subjects, illustrated them with incidents, enriched them with character, lighted them up with expression and intelligence, and given them the warmth and glow of real existences, have received so little encouragement and applause, even from their brothers, who ought to be the most alive to such merits, if it were for no other reason than the difficulty which *they* know to attend such achievements, that the perseverance they have shown and the example they have set have few or no followers.

A few years more will very probably decide a very important point on which the welfare and advancement of art mainly depend. It remains to be seen whether artists will yield to the prevailing spirit of the age, and mend themselves, or whether they will wait until the general amelioration of public knowledge and taste compels them to desert their old practices, and adopt others — those on which the real dignity and importance of art have ever rested and will ever depend.

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### ANECDOTES OF ARTISTS.

It must have been about the year 1815, on a fine bright morning for the neighbourhood of the great and smoky metropolis, that a tall, slim, and pale youth, in company with a short, stout, ruddy-complexioned man, were to be seen conversing and walking slowly together in the direction of Kensington. The youth had rather a dejected air, and appeared to progress as if not quite satisfied, or confident in the success of the errand he was going upon, whatever that might be. There was a kind and patronising manner about his ruddy companion, who stopped every now and then to talk, and who appeared to speak in an earnest, jocose, and consoling manner. "Hout, mon, never mind! ye'll git used to these things, and ye'll know all aboot it soon. Tut, ye'll find this a vary different sort o' mon, tak my word for it, and ye'll be proud to know him;—ye ought, at any rate." "Gad, Boston," said the youth, "I hope he's not a Scotchman, like the other?" "Then he just is, my young friend," was the reply. Here the youth turned round, and said, in rather a desponding tone, "I am very sorry, Mr. Boston, but you must excuse me; I must decline going." "What the de'il's come to ye?" said Boston, looking with some surprise. "Why," said the youth, "after the rebuff I met with this morning, I dare not venture upon another. I am a mere beginner in Art; I know nothing of oils, colours, and varnishes, and was not even aware that there were any secrets in the use of them. I asked that old fellow you took me to,

civilly, and without knowing I was wrong, to tell me what materials were used in oil painting. He must have seen by my manner that I was unconscious of asking an improper question; — and then the old brute turns fiercely upon me, and grunts out — ‘Sur, there are sacreets in the art, wutch whun a mon has foound oot, he mun keep to himsel.’ The deuce take it, I shall never like a Scotchman again as long as I live, or bear to hear a Scotticism.” This tirade was finished in the midst of a long and hearty laugh from Boston, who rested one hand upon his stick, the other upon the arm of his companion. “Hoot awa, hoot awa! my young friend; never fash yersel about sic things as they, mon! The londskep paneter’s a muckle odd de’il sometimes; he’s an old man and a wee crabbed: but never mind; the one I’ll tak ye to’s a differ manner o’ mon, out and out — a leeberal gentleman, and a kind soul he. I’ll wager ye may ask him ony and all the questins ye can think of, and he’ll answer ye straight and clear. Come along with ye, do.” “Well,” replied the youth, “you have taken some trouble for me, and I am certainly much obliged to you; but I must say I have no great devotion for the deed.” “Hoot,” said Boston, laughing, and, taking the arm of the young painter, they trudged off at a quick pace, and were soon at the door of the gentleman they were going to visit. The knock was given, the pale youth showed signs of trepidation, looking at his companion for encouragement, who smiled and nodded his head. Presently the door was opened, and in a few minutes they were shown into a back drawing-room, in which stood two easels with unfinished pictures upon them; on a table by the window there lay a palette covered with colour brushes, gallipots, bottles, books portfolios, &c., the whole forming a pretty sample of a painter’s room; but still in better order than such localities commonly are found. The young painter gave a hasty and a timid glance: a footstep announced some one, and directly a tall young man with an intelligent face, high cheek bones, grey eyes, and reddish hair, made his appearance. Boston and this gentleman greeted each other while the youth stood sufficiently behind, so as to be scarcely observed. After a few words of “auld lang syne,” Boston introduced his companion as a young painter who was just beginning to try his hand, and would be very glad of any information on the subject which could be afforded to him. The face of the tall man at once lighted up with a kind inviting smile; and, as the late Benjamin West said, a kiss given him by his mother, who stole upon and caught him at work, *made him a painter*, so that smile of the tall man at once gave confidence and hope; and if it did not make a painter of that youth, it was certainly never forgotten by him. A number of questions were asked at once with apparent interest. What subjects did the youth paint? — what branch of the art did he consider himself best qualified for? — had he drawn from the antique? from the life? — had he any instructor, or was he self-taught? and what particularly did he wish to inquire about? All this was said kindly, but with so strong an accent, that after what had occurred it had a slight influence upon the nerves of the youth,

who answered timidly, and asked questions with the tone of one who seemed to fear what sort of an answer might be given them. Perceiving some hesitation, the tall man smiled again, and, addressing himself to the youth, he said, in a kind and friendly manner, "I shall be very happy to tell you any thing I know; you need not fear to ask me: the art of a painter is unlike that of a juggler, it does not depend upon a trick; there are no secrets in the art; and painters are always glad to communicate all they know to their brothers." Here Boston could no longer contain himself; but, seizing the hands of the youth, he exclaimed, "Didn't I tell ye—didn't I say ye might ax ony thing, hear till him noo. I toad ye sae." Not clearly understanding the drift of all this, the tall good man smiled, and said, "Yes, certainly; but I'll show you what I was just doing;" and, running down stairs, he brought up a small pannel, upon which was painted in the most careful way a study of sundry pieces of glass and crockery ware, which appeared to have been accidentally left in a group upon a dresser in the kitchen. The advantage of studying from nature, and the necessity of learning the peculiar character of things, were pointed out to the youth. After which the two pictures upon the easels were commented upon; the use of living models, the difficulty of obtaining such as were wanted; the mode of treating the subject; the difficulties of giving pure and unmixed expression; careful drawing, finish, processes, colour, oils, varnishes. In short, every thing was gone over which a beginner has occasion to know, with a force and clearness likely to leave a lasting impression if given upon an ordinary occasion only; but, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the remarks made were doubly grateful and impressive. The youth was asked in the kindest way to bring some one of his productions, a privilege of which he did not fail to take advantage more than once or twice. He was complimented, and encouraged to proceed. Alas! Death has taken him who thus liberally bestowed the most grateful boon a man can give—hope to a young and ardent mind. And among the deep and general regrets which followed him to a premature grave, none were more sincere than those of the young painter. The man here spoken of was the late Sir David Wilkie; the then youth—THE EDITOR OF THE ARTIST'S AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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The Editor remembers that the two pictures upon the easels were "The Refusal," from Burns's Songs, and "The Letter of Introduction." He also recollects that on asking Sir David Wilkie what vehicle he used, his reply was, "simply common linseed oil and spirits of turpentine." As vehicles have since called forth some inquiry, it may be well to state this fact.

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THE  
ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S  
MAGAZINE.

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A  
Glance at the contemplated Pictorial Adornment  
OF  
THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

AN ESSAY IN PARTS,

RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED TO THE GENTLEMEN OF HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSION.

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PART THE SECOND.

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It is a painful circumstance in pursuing the investigation of a grateful subject like the present, in which there is so much to call forth admiration, to inspire respect, and to stir some of the best feelings of the heart, that there should be any part of it to which, upon principle and conviction, one feels compelled to meet with a deep, well-considered, and positive objection.

This objection is offered to the adoption of FRESCO as a means of Art.

As an impartial examiner of the subject, it behoves me to admit that there are certain points and particulars in which fresco is to be preferred to oil painting, but these when put into comparison with the overwhelming advantages of oil, sink into utter insignificance. There is certainly a kind of charm and allurements attached to fresco which it is difficult to withstand and hard to put a just value upon; and it is almost impossible in such a case to keep the feelings from interfering with the judgment. There is scarcely a painter, I think, who has visited and luxuriated among the frescoes of Pisa, Florence, Sienna, and Rome, who would not like to try his hand at it; but there is scarcely one I hope who would wish to see it adopted in this country, or who could conscientiously recommend it.

A painter while contemplating these works in the sacred abodes of the genius of fresco, will turn with coldness, and perhaps disdain, to

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the florid and factitious schools of modern Art. Oil, with its glossy glare, and rich and gaudy embellishments of colour and effect, can scarcely be regarded as the proper medium of sober thoughts, deep feelings, and serious purposes, while fresco inspires the sentiment it appears best calculated to record.

A portion of this impression is associative, occasioned by place and circumstance; the rest is unreal. No excellences ever reached by fresco are superior, but most are inferior, to those attained in oil painting. A fresco, from its want of elaboration, obtains and conveys something of the agreeable character of a sketch, to equal which, nothing more is necessary than to leave the oil picture unfinished and devoid of that labour which, when seen, conveys an unpleasant impression to the spectator. A person apt to give way to his impressions, and unacquainted with the principles and processes of Art, will perhaps suffer his feelings to govern him, and, without questioning them, permit an idea to take possession of his mind that fresco has much higher pretensions and capabilities than oil; but to the painter, although impressed in a similar way under similar circumstances, the case is different. He may feel so well satisfied with what he sees as to have no disposition to criticise it; but the moment he turns to technical considerations, he feels at once that oil painting is capable not only of doing as much as he sees achieved in fresco, but — much more.

It is not necessary to stop to criticise and examine the many alleged particulars in which fresco is said to take the lead of oil painting; the greater part of what is claimed for fresco by unprofessional people is only calculated to raise a smile upon the face of the painter, by whom its peculiar characteristics can be alone appreciated.

Almost the sole advantage attending works in fresco is, that less light is required for their illumination than for those in oil; but at the same time, the force acquired by the depth of tone to which pictures in oil may be carried, affords a far greater contrast between the light and dark parts than can be obtained in fresco.

The rationale for this facility of illumination is, that the colour lies on the surface, so that the light has not to pass through a medium of a density which differs from that of the air, and thus become refracted and reduced.

The whole tone of a work in fresco is somewhat higher and lighter than one in oil, and more for this reason than any other. A picture in fresco resembles a water-colour drawing.

It is quite clear, however, that a painter choosing to do so could give to an oil picture perhaps full as much brightness or height of tone as any work in fresco exhibits. The reason he does not do so is, that he has a more complete and efficient mode or process at his command, one by which he can represent the natural appearance of objects more completely, so as to give them the various characters and sentiments they assume under different circumstances, as they address themselves to the eye and the mind.

The first and most powerful objection against fresco is its incapability of affording the advantages which belong to EXPERIMENT. No intelligent person can be insensible or uninformed as to the boundless advantages, discoveries, and improvements which have been derived from experiment in all the ordinary and multifarious operations in which men are engaged. It is an established axiom amongst operators of every kind, that going *wrong* is as much a source of instruction as going right, and that men learn as much by their errors and mistakes as by their successes. If this be true, what a forcible objection lies against fresco, which will not admit of mistakes without the penalty of utter and irrevocable failure: thus depriving experiment of half its advantages! All the reading, thinking, and enquiring people of the world are well aware of the truth of what is here asserted, and the least intelligent may readily imagine the importance of a means which affords abundant facilities where the object aimed at is peculiarly difficult of attainment, over that which affords but few.

Now it need not be argued and contended for, that the operations of the painter embrace more difficulties, both mental and mechanical, than any other pursuit. There is no object therefore of human ingenuity which required so many, and such comprehensive facilities, as the Art of Painting. What shall be said for the adoption of a means which cramps and limits the operation to a few instead of extending the number and advantages of those he already possesses? If it be asked why such means were once employed, and thought sufficient, the answer is a plain and a ready one, — no other means were then known. Upon what reasonable plea then can they be resorted to, at a period when modern science has superseded them by abundant and efficient substitutes? It is the painter alone who can judge of the real and important value of experiment; perhaps it is impossible to convey an idea of this to the unprofessional and non-operative reader. The power given him by the means employed to advance to the end, and to return back to the beginning, constitute an advantage upon which thousands of pictorial excellences are dependent, and from which they had their origin. This is a mine of wealth in Art, the possession of which, as in the case of some other great gifts, has often led to the most reckless extravagance and abuse. This facility of change has a charm in it which few men have power fully to resist, and many have yielded to its illusions until they have fairly lost sight of Art and their object together.\*

\* \* There is on record an account of one of the old masters, whose name I forget, who, under the monomania described, and the influence of some morbid feeling which attached to him, would, whenever opportunity was afforded, get hold of some of his finished pictures, and after retouching the texture, skin, and colour of the flesh of his figures, descend gradually by a kind of graphic synthesis to the anatomy of their forms, and from thence to the bones, *painting away the flesh*, and reducing them to skeletons, which, according to the method he adopted, were the rudiments of the forms first sketched in upon his canvass.

Our invaluable countryman Reynolds was also deeply affected with a mania for the abuse of this grand function of art. Upon sending home a picture he painted

In the study and pursuit of an art, which involves more difficulties than the most powerful mind, and the best understood, and the firmest purpose are enabled to cope with, aided by all the advantages which experience can teach and ingenuity contrive, does it not appear the next thing to downright insanity to adopt a means which is limited and insufficient, in the place of one affording every requisite facility? There are people of course who argue for the extra honour of succeeding when the difficulties are proportionably great. It would be well for such persons to show that they can master and make a full use of the *easy mode*, before they lay claim to the credit of being able to manage the *difficult*. The merit of contending with difficulties of this sort is very like what might be claimed by an artist for executing a work with his feet instead of his hands. Instances are to be found in which persons, born without hands, have learnt to write, draw, and paint with these inferior members of the body, and who might for that reason have set up pretensions to a professor's claim in some parts of the world even at the present day; but among rational and intelligent people the better mode and the better instruments provided by nature will ever be preferred.

It would appear almost useless to elaborate a point, which is in itself so clear, if circumstances did not indicate that, in spite of its clearness, it stands in danger of being mystified and mistaken. To a person at all acquainted with art practically, it is superfluous to say any thing; to those who are not, a word more on the subject may not be wasted.

Let any one who has ever undertaken the investigation of a theorem for example, from the theme of a school-boy to the most elaborate and complete essay on any subject, reflect on the mode adopted and pursued by the mind. At first the whole matter is a kind of chaos,

for the Empress of Russia, he is said to have remarked, that he had sent *nine pictures*, some better and some worse, than *that upon the surface*. A number of amusing anecdotes are told of him, all hanging upon this restless love of change. My old friend, the late Sir William Beechey, a name which none who knew him can mention without a lively recollection of his intelligence, his many virtues, and agreeable qualities, used to tell a number of these in his own humorous way. He remembered to have seen a portrait in progress into which Reynolds had introduced a peacock beautifully painted, with his tail extending towards the *side* of the picture. A day or two after he saw the same peacock with a tail springing out of his neck, and extending into the centre of the picture; and a day or two more he was surprised by seeing the tail of the bird spread out behind, and presenting an appearance which might have puzzled the profoundest ornithologist, a peacock with three tails. Sir William also recollected the portrait of a midshipman upon which Reynolds was trying the effect of placing the lace bound hat then worn, and which made one of the auxiliaries of the picture, first, Sir Joshua had put the hat into the young gentleman's hand, then he had tried the effect of putting one under his arm, and again he had put another upon his head. Just as the picture was in this state, the original made his appearance, and could not express his delight to see himself represented with three hats. The painter intimated that it was an experiment to try the effect, and that they were not intended to remain. "Not intended to remain, Mr. Reynolds! by —, if you take out the hats, you may keep the picture. I have three hats, and why should not I be painted with them, I should like to know?"

with bright and prominent points striking out here and there; presently these points begin to shift their places, and take those to which their importance entitles them. After a little while, one is found to take the lead of all the rest; and thus a beginning is formed, one *end of the subject*, if it may be so expressed, presents itself. The moment this is decided the matter falls into something like arrangement, and from this point it progresses rapidly. All that belongs to it properly is to be included, and, as a matter of course, a great deal of what the mind collects in its progress is to be rejected. This circumstance creates nodes, or obstructions, which it is not easy to pass. At last one is passed, and then another and another, and so on, to the end. Then comes a review and revisal of the whole, ejections, retrenchments, and additions, and thus the labour ends. In the process, it is very curious to observe the gradual increase of the perceptive powers of the mind brightening by little and little into its greatest illumination. At first it gropes its way, as it were, in the dark, much as one does in a long subterranean tunnel or passage, with a low, glimmering light at the end; one step, one acquisition, leads on to another, until at last we emerge into full day, and feel some surprise at the progress we have made, the quantity we have collected, and the success which has attended upon exertions, which, in the beginning, promised nothing. Precisely the same sort of thing happens in experimentalising, studying, and working out the subject and treatment of a picture.

The false and visionary impressions we receive when reading accounts of those wonderful geniuses, who fetched fire from heaven to animate their works, who looked into their own souls for what their senses and their experience had not provided for them, are well calculated to blind us against the perception of the true method pursued in every human operation of the kind spoken of. It appears there is a natural bias towards the *marvellous* in such matters, which is preferred to the *rational*. Thus it is believed that certain artists of old discovered some *secret*, upon which their excellence rests. Michael Angelo discovered in the fragment of a figure — the *Torso*, known by his name, a *certain principle*, which of course enabled him to take a short cut to excellence, and save himself all the trouble of elaborating his subject. And thus I suppose he was enabled, according to the same authority, to begin at once upon his block of marble, instead of pursuing the vulgar method of making a sketch, or dozens, as some have done, and afterwards, as a preparatory step, a model in clay. It suited his great genius to waste his time, and exercise his mind and his muscles in hewing rough blocks into shape, and in employing his great powers in a species of drudgery, requiring qualifications closely allied with those of the labourers, who fell trees and break stone for mending the roads. The late Mr. Jackson, the portrait painter, and no mean authority, used to recommend, in the prosecution of a picture, that the painter should endeavour as soon as possible to get his work *into a mess*. He used to say the painter would be sure to receive an excel-



lent lesson in *getting it out again*, as it gave instruction in two ways, by going wrong and going right. In this way oil painting guides and instructs, while fresco trammels and perplexes. Every body knows that miniature painting is a difficult branch of art, because so few succeed in it; but it is not generally known that the want of success is occasioned by certain mechanical difficulties which stand in the way—a want of the facilities afforded by oil. The consequence is, that all miniatures present similar defects. No artist in this line learns to draw beyond the head, or attempt the varied effects of other modes of art. The grand cause is the *difficulty of making alterations*. What shall be said of that method which allows of none? Operators are not only deterred from making the attempt, but when it is made, the process is so slow that the feeling which prompts it evaporates, and even the sense itself flags, as the eye, from being long employed on one point, loses its discrimination.

Every inefficient mode of art entails upon those who exercise it some peculiar defect which might easily be pointed out. Portrait painters generally have one character of light most favourable to likenesses, one mode of treatment, one capability to extent of capacity in drawing. So that that sarcastic wit, Fuseli, used to designate them as “Gode bainters to de feeft bortenhole of de vaistcote.”

It is easy to raise an objection to these remarks on the non-experimental character of fresco, by pretending that every requisite alteration may be made in the Cartoons, as a preparatory step to the finished work. But it will go rather against the experience of mankind to regard a mode of operation which *has limits*, equal in facilities with one which *has no limits*. An operator may achieve much within a given space of time and opportunity, but he is likely to do much more under circumstances when no restrictions whatever are put upon him. It is certainly true that an artist may change and alter his design as he pleases: he may make trial of certain effects in black and white, or he may paint his subject in colours—in oil-colours if he likes, and copy it in fresco. This would be the best method to pursue, and the only objection against it is, that, after all his labour, his work in oil would be worth more than that in fresco. A pretty general objection also exists against copying, even a man's own works, which it is enough simply to advert to.

But let us proceed at once to the notice of some facts, which speak plainly, and which will admit of but one interpretation. Let us take the following, which are clear and illustrative, and altogether unquestionable.

THE LARGEST AND THE BEST PRESERVED PICTURES IN THE WORLD ARE PAINTINGS IN OIL COLOUR.

These works are at Venice, a spot in which all attempts that have been made in fresco have utterly failed and perished! These works in oil are at this hour almost as perfect as when they came from the hand of the artist.

Neither in this locality, nor in any other, are there any works in

fresco approaching a perfect state of preservation. *All* are more or less damaged, and a large proportion are utterly destroyed.

Compare the best preserved works in fresco, with the best preserved works in oil, and the superiority of the last, as to durability, will be strikingly apparent. Some few, it is true, have suffered by time, but none that we know of have been completely destroyed by it.

Who, in the face of such facts, will contend for the durability of fresco?

As assertions are not made unsupported by proofs, take the following:—

At Venice, the church of St. Sebastian, an immense space has been painted entirely by Paul Veronese, *IN OIL*. This work is slightly obscured by dirt, but it is still bright, and by the application of a sponge and a little water might be rendered as perfect as it left his hands.

The ceiling of the ducal palace, the largest picture ever painted, is in perfect condition; and although dirtied and ill lighted, is still in itself as bright as any fresco that exists.

None of these pictures are lighted in a favourable manner; they have but the casual light of the building in which they are placed.

In the *Accademia delle belle Arte* are other large works of the same master, all perfect. That at the end of the room of the new gallery, formerly in the church of St. John and St. Paul, the subject of which is "Christ at the House of Levi," is so bright and natural that, at first sight, it might be mistaken for a real and living scene. This picture, if I remember right, is nineteen paces long, not less than fifty feet!

In the first new room, before you reach this picture, "The Presentation to the Temple," by Titian, meets your gaze, and astonishes you by the beautiful art it displays, as well as by its bright and perfect condition. Dimensions about thirty feet long, &c.

In the other gallery, called the "*Sala delle pubbliche funzioni*," is the wonderful picture by Tintoretto, called "The Miracle of the Slave." It is about twenty-five feet long, and although of a darker character in style than the works of Paul Veronese, it is perfect, and appears to have undergone no change. In the ducal palace there are still larger works by Tintoretto: one I remember fills the whole end of a grand saloon, which measures seventy-three feet.

Hundreds of other instances, all corroborative of the durability of oil painting, might be produced. It may be worth while to mention one case, where an oil picture has resisted for many, many years those grand agents of the great destroyer time, damp, dirt, and neglect! This is the famous picture of the "Peter Martyr\*," by Titian, in the church of St. John and St. Paul, at Venice. This picture has long been utterly neglected; nothing has been done to protect or defend it, the surface is covered with damp and dirt, and behind the canvass has been rotting, and the threads of which it is composed

\* Now deposited at the Academy.

falling away, loaded with mildew; yet the picture is still perfect and bright, and capable of complete restoration.

Some of the largest and finest pictures of John Bellini are also in this church, painted upon wood, the surface of which is still quite perfect, whatever may be the condition of the substance upon which they are painted.

Further examples are scarcely worth referring to; if they were, we might enter the antique cabinet of the same gallery, at Venice, and choose where we like.

The antique gallery here contains some curious examples of art and abundant proofs of the durability of oil painting. There is a picture by Raphael, containing three small figures, belonging to the Bridge-water collection, which is absolutely as bright and perfect as if painted but a month since, and is in this respect, as well as for its intrinsic excellence, an object of great curiosity and interest.

There are many other objections against the adoption of fresco in this, and, indeed, every other country, which are very weighty and important.

One of these is the uncertainty of the materials it is necessary to employ.

Modern science has done much, and may do more in fixing certain principles belonging to certain matters and influences; but chemistry can no more make honey out of a bunch of flowers, than afford an efficient test of that which it is the province of time alone to prove and decide. Excuses of course are always ready, so that failures in fresco, from the Vatican to the chapel in Moor Fields, are always to be accounted for.

There is no doubt but that the failure of fresco is sometimes to be attributed to some defect in the process. It is either in the lime used, or in the sand, or in something else. But this, instead of furnishing a plea for fresco, constitutes a serious objection, as it proves that the materials employed are not to be depended upon, but are liable to deceive those even who have had great experience in the use of them. In oil painting the case is very different; an artist may use materials for the sake of experiment, which may fail; but it is in his power at all times, and under all circumstances, to employ such as can be most certainly depended upon.

Vasari, who lived at the time fresco painting was in the highest state of practical perfection, who knew every item of the process, and who has had the intelligence and industry to record so many particulars concerning it, and the men who practised it, *and who is at the present time the best authority we have*, has left in his own works in fresco a monument of its incapability and uncertainty. His talent as an artist have nothing to do with his failure; it rests with the materials he wrought in. There can be no doubt that one so learned took care to procure the safest and the best, yet his work, in the vestibule of the Sistine Chapel, has not only changed, but almost perished. If such a man as Vasari could not obtain materials which

could be depended upon, situated as he was, who in the present day is to direct us in the selection and in the use of them?

The failure, deterioration, and destruction of works in fresco, over and above what is to be found in those executed in oil, supposing an *equal* share of liability, is an argument decidedly in favour of the last. But it is not difficult to show that the chances of preservation are very much in favour of the first.

Works in fresco are most commonly found in sacred edifices, where, as a matter of course, they are preserved with more than ordinary care, through a feeling which does not in any way attach itself to edifices of ordinary and domestic use.

They are, moreover, an integral part of such edifices, and are not subject to the accidents which attend upon a change of localities. As to the injury and destruction which is attributed to barbarians, brutal soldiers, and idle sight-seers, none can deny that works of art are more likely to be protected in churches, cloisters, halls of state and ceremony, than in private dwellings. Most of the movable works of art have undergone some injury, from a cause to which works in fresco are not liable—removal. Every thing, therefore, is in favour of the preservation of fresco: it is the more singular that it should have suffered in such a disproportionate degree!

The failure of fresco in ordinary cases, though in itself an evil, may still be referred to as a useful lesson. It is a matter of very little consequence when put in comparison with the gradual decay, and the ultimate and early destruction of such noble works as those of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel, and of Raphael in the chambers of the Vatican.

That these great and matchless works should be fast hastening to destruction, and *that no means can be resorted to for saving them*, not only oppresses the spirit of taste with affliction, but has a reference to fresco as a means of art which is in no way calculated to lift it again into life, or to procure it respect.

During the four winters I remained at Rome, I must at least have visited the Vatican one hundred times, and upon these occasions I must have spoken to one hundred artists of different nations on the subject of these splendid works. Out of that number I do not remember one who did not readily assent to the proposition, that it was a serious misfortune to art that these works were not executed upon canvass in oil, and not upon the walls in fresco.

The sublime and stupendous work of Michael Angelo in the Sistine chapel is in a state of decay, and has undergone changes which have already half deprived it of its original beauty and excellence.

I had an opportunity twice of mounting a scaffold, and thus approaching within a few feet of this wondrous work of art, the more wondrous the nearer it is approached. I examined it closely at that height with an opera glass, and can speak positively as to its deplorable condition, and of its peculiar merits in detail. None can form a notion of the beauty, the delicacy, the careful finish, the minute labour which has

been bestowed upon it, nor speak in adequate terms of the variety of character, force and truth of expression with which it abounds, and which, at a distance, is very much deteriorated and lost. Many little artistical matters, highly interesting and curious to the painter, present themselves, and which it is altogether impossible to see in the ordinary way from the floor of the chapel. The beauty of colours, and the bold and simple mode of shadowing and relief, strikes at once in a very impressive way. The parts are also seen which militate against the intended effect. This injury is produced by the cracking and discolouration of the ground upon which the work is executed. They often break in upon the breadth of masses, and give a false tone both in colour and depth to the parts they affect. Parts which were once light and came forward, are thus obscured and fall back out of their places into a distance they were never intended to occupy. So destructive is this to the correct impression intended to be given, and which a painter knows well how to estimate, that, after having examined this work from a favourable position, he can never afterwards bear to contemplate it from below. The ten thousand cracks which cross and intersect the work in every possible way, the change and discolouration by damp producing a false and unnatural effect, which, if the painter could rise from his grave and contemplate, would for ever disturb his future rest. The work on the ceiling has evidently never been injured by any other means than those of time, weather, and natural decay.

Again, there is another great work by the same mighty hand in the Pauline Chapel, which is so obscured and injured by dirt, smoke, and natural causes, that it can scarcely be seen at all, and is therefore lost to the world. There is no doubt that this work was once bright and perfect, and if fortunately it had been executed in oil, instead of fresco, it might be restored to its original state.

Among numerous instances of the premature decay of fresco, it is lamentable in the last degree to reckon the works of Raphael. Who can look or think of the labours of his hand fast perishing without sorrow and the deepest regret, and grieve that the produce of his noble mind has been committed to the keeping of such treacherous materials?

It is idle to talk of the destruction of these glorious works by manual and foreign means: something of the sort certainly may have happened, but they must have been ingenious operators who could have given to these works *the appearance* of injury which they present, the worst character of which has clearly enough been brought about by time and the *instability of the means employed*. The lower parts of the houses in Italy, Rome in particular, are said to be damp, and on this account the fresco paintings, with which many were ornamented, are said to be subject to decay. But the *stanze* of Raphael are elevated two stories high, and the building itself stands upon an eminence, and overlooks the most beautiful scenery in the world. The rooms which they adorn have never been used for domestic purposes; no fires, torches, or candles have ever been used in them; they are well venti-

lated, and every possible care has been taken to preserve the precious treasures they inclose; alas, in vain.

The works in the palace of the *Farnesina* are also elevated in dry secure chambers; but, like those in the Vatican, they are seriously injured, and in less than a century after they were executed required reparation. It is well known that Carlo Maratti *repaired and restored* the frescoes of Raphael about a century after they were painted.

Some learned persons who have examined chemically the combination formed between the mortar and the colour laid upon it, have spoken of the formation of a kind of crystallised surface, which tends to *preserve* the colour and prevent its being rubbed or washed off. It may be so for any thing I know, but certain it is, that the ancient frescoes exhibit nothing of the sort; it is very difficult, as people acquainted with the subject know, to distinguish an ancient painting in *tempora* from one in fresco, so much does the surface of one resemble the other. No one who has examined the fine works of Raphael will deny that the surface is in that dry, mealy, crumbling condition, that it gives pain to one anxious for their preservation to look at, from the conviction that they cannot be touched even to brush the dust off, without doing some slight injury, and carrying away some small portion of work which can never be restored; and, what is even worse, not long preserved.

It is said that it is as easy to clean fresco as oil painting, as if cleaning were all that pictures required — all that is necessary to their preservation. Admitting that fresco painting can be cleaned as easily as oil, which is not strictly true, there is another consideration which is never touched upon. Walls, just in proportion as they present a rougher surface than canvass, are liable to an extra accumulation of dust and dirt, so much more oftener will it require to be done, and so much more difficult will it be to do. Oil pictures are also protected in some degree by their frames, and by the inclining position in which they are hung.

The case at best is very different with oil and fresco works. Such a decay as does take place sooner or later is easily remedied and set to rights in oil pictures, whilst in fresco all restoration is impossible; an oil picture becomes, in judicious hands, as fresh, as bright, and as perfect as it was the hour it was painted. Can this be said of fresco? If an oil picture be ever so badly treated, scratched, doubled up, torn into fifty pieces, or allowed to hang in damp places, which will utterly destroy fresco, until it rots and falls piecemeal, while the surface is preserved, and the paint and varnish exist at all, a clever liner can put the fragments together, and make the picture as perfect as it was at first. New canvasses can be repeated to the end of time, if required; the different layers of colour even can be shewn, and every gradation of the painter's work; the colour of the ground upon which he began, his first thoughts given in the sketch; and as regards the finished work, the most delicate glazing can be removed and transferred without injury.

Let us look for a moment at what this repairing consists in. When

an oil picture wants repairing, when it is blackened, scratched, torn, rubbed, its freshness gone, its dark parts looking light, and its light dark; in short, when its character, as a picture, appears injured and quite lost, it is only necessary to put it into a skilful person's hands, and it comes out perfect, without adding any thing or taking any thing away from the work of the master: there it is, as completely his as it was at first. What is the nature of restoring fresco? The repainting of the picture in parts, and that not by the original process; that is impossible, but by a means which is known to be imperfect and injurious, one which is prohibited because it will not amalgamate, and which will change and turn dark. In real truth, fresco once injured cannot be restored.

I doubt very much the possibility of cleaning a fresco completely, even where it has become commonly dirty, when it has got into a bad state. I know it to be quite impossible, and I support my assertion by the following facts: — "The Last Judgment" of Michael Angelo, as all the world knows, is so blackened and injured that it is seen but very imperfectly, and with great difficulty. The Baron Camucini was employed to try to clean and restore this great work. He began at the top of it, the part in much the best preservation, and proceeded to some little extent in his task; but, from some cause which has not been explained, he was stopped, or resigned the undertaking. How different would have been the case had this splendid work been painted in oil, and put into the hands of any restorer half as well conversant with art as this gentleman! the work would have proceeded in security and the certainty of success, while curious matters might have come out in the operation, and expectation would have stood on tip-toe to see and enjoy the glories of this great work in its pristine strength and beauty.

There are also the frescoes at Grotta Ferata, executed by Domenichino, which are of a later date than those already spoken of. They have been carefully guarded in a side chapel of the church, and appear not to have been injured by *accident*; but within the last few years they have been restored by the Baron Camucini, as an inscription upon the wall tells you.

Last of all, let us take a case out of which the recommendation to adopt fresco in this country has in a great measure sprung. This is the attempt which has been made by certain German painters and patrons to restore, as it has been falsely called, the use of fresco in the present day. This attempt was made something less than twenty years ago by Cornelius, Overbeck, Schnor, and another or two. Their first work was executed in a house called the Tempietto, which is said to have been formerly the residence of Claude, and which stands upon the Pincian Hill, at the top of that grand flight of steps leading out of the Piazza di Spagna, the most creditable work of that favourite of fortune and caprice, the renowned Bernini. This work is in tolerably good preservation. The same artists executed another near the church of St. John Lateran, in a house called the Villa Massime. In the

short period which has elapsed, this work has undergone considerable change, and some parts of it has already perished.\*

When Raphael commenced painting the hall of Constantine in oil, after all the experience he had had in fresco, it is pretty clear evidence that he had some reasons for preferring the one mode to the other; and that his scholars changed his plan, and executed the work in fresco, says but little against the wiser intentions of their master. The plan determined on, to execute this grand work in oil, is exactly of a piece with every thing undertaken by the powerful mind of this great man, whose perceptions and operations advanced towards perfection with a rapidity unknown in the instance of any other mortal. He appears to have seized at once whatever was most appropriate and proper for the demands of his Art; and whatever he attempted, he set about with an earnestness that could not fail of success. Under his master, Perugino, he learnt at once all that could be taught him; and so completely did he identify himself with his modes of thought and feeling, and the manner of his practice, that in pictures in which both master and scholar are known to have worked together, it is impossible to distinguish one from the other. He appears to have imbibed all the peculiar excellences of Perugino, and then to have branched off into the route indicated by his own superior genius. His arabesques rivalled the best decorations of the kind; his frescoes equalled, and soon surpassed, all that had been done, or was then doing. Upon seeing the works of Michael Angelo, he is said to have changed his style. ONE ATTEMPT satisfied him; a striking mark of his good sense. He perceived however a beauty of colour in those works which fresco had never before presented to his eyes, and he immediately saw that that style of Art was capable of much more than the meagre effect usually given to it. It was but necessary for him to make the trial of giving to fresco all the richness, harmony, and effect of oil painting, at once out-doing all that was ever thought of or undertaken by former aspirants; and, as Mr. Eastlake has very justly observed in his evidence, eclipsing the best colourists in their own particular excellence. These effects served as the guides to others, which, no doubt, had they been carried out, would have produced results still more abundant in honour and fame; but death suddenly arrested his progress, and the advancement and glory of Art together.

\* Let it be observed here that fresco in Italy is no new and untried art, but that from the time of Raphael and before, until the present hour, fresco painting has been in constant practice, so that the materials and processes are perfectly well known. In every other studio of the artists you find the remains of attempts which have been made by way of trial by their occupants. In every *café* you find the operators themselves, and in every colourman's shop you find a range of pots with colours prepared for fresco painting, and you have only to walk out in any direction to see them employed. The visitors to the Bank of those liberal and spirited men the Torlonias, a numerous, and it is to be hoped an observant class, can hardly have failed to remark a very beautiful sample of ornamental fresco, comprising arches with the sky seen through, and other architectural decorations in the court-yard of that palace.



There can be no doubt but that Raphael saw the imperfections and incapacities of the style of Art he had been practising. His experience must have enabled him to overcome entirely every technical difficulty. He knew fresco thoroughly, and at once resolved to abandon it for a style more competent and complete — he resolved to perform his task in oil. Now, if we look at what has been said about the competency of fresco, and its peculiar adaptation and fitness for works occupying a large space, we shall see at once that the rejection of it upon this occasion was no great compliment to its capabilities. The Hall of Constantine, as every body knows, is almost as large as all the other chambers whose walls had been submitted to the hand of this great man. Yet for this stupendous undertaking he preferred oil to fresco. It is not fair to put such things in comparison; but the two figures painted by his hand, in oil, and still left, are so excellent, and look so powerfully substantial and durable, by the side of forms which look like shadows fading into nonentity, that fresco never showed itself to greater disadvantage.

Who does not regret that the sublime work of the Last Supper at Milan by Leonardo da Vinci was not executed in oil colours upon canvass, and not upon a wall, by the injuries arising from which it was scarcely visible sixty years after it was finished, *because* it is said the wall was badly prepared. Canvasses have the merit of being well prepared, and of retaining what is committed to their charge.

There are some inconveniences of a minor character which affect the adoption of fresco in this country.

It is admitted that five months in the year is all the time that could possibly be occupied in fresco painting, so that a work to which it would be necessary to devote one year, would demand parts of three for its completion. This, taking the chances of things in connection with the age of the operator, might be of consequence, as it might require another hand for the finish. It is remarked that in some respects the climate of this country is more favourable to fresco than that of Italy: in how many particulars is the climate of Italy more favourable than that of England? Michael Angelo worked three years at the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel; in England the work would have occupied nine.

The effect of climate is a very difficult point to investigate and to estimate. The climate of Calais is very much like that of Dover, yet grapes will hang and ripen, and make wine in France, whilst in England they will rot, and can only be converted into vinegar.

It is certainly singular that fresco should have been exercised so sparingly at Venice, since a passion for decoration prevailed there; while but a few miles inland, it was practised every where. It is not that the style of Art peculiar to the Venetians had any thing to do with it, for the originators and practitioners of that style did not abstain from the use of fresco, but practised it elsewhere. Titian, for example, painted fresco at Venice — it has perished; he employed fresco at Padua, a distance only of twenty miles — it remains. Padua

also is the conservatory of some of the earliest works in fresco, those of Giotto Massacio and others. Many portions of these are of course destroyed, and others remain tolerably perfect. The work of Massacio, however, painted upon wall, is almost entirely destroyed; that we possess, painted upon frail paper, and now deposited at Hampton Court, is almost perfect in preservation.

Before leaving this part of the subject, already too long, and still imperfect, it may be well to remark that the author entertains no fears whatever for the success of British artists, should they be called upon to work in fresco: he is perfectly certain that they will come from the trial with as much honour as attaches to any modern operators. Judging from certain characteristics of native art, no artists appear so likely to succeed, since they possess a readiness and mastery of execution highly favourable to the object. As for *experience*, a want of that will not stand in the way; some modes of Art practised in England are closely allied to it, and perhaps something in favour of the proposition may be obtained by referring to the fact, that when Michael Angelo commenced his herculean labours in the Vatican, he had then never tried his hand at fresco painting.

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## ANECDOTES OF ARTISTS.

### THE LATE SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

It has been remarked that a greater misfortune cannot befall an honourable profession, than for bad men to practise it; by the same principle it is certain that the private worth of the man graces the pursuit to which he belongs as much as his talents. It is delightful thus to add the applause of a virtuous conduct to the admiration of merits upon which an extensive and lasting reputation is founded. An humble individual like myself can add but little to the popular estimation of such a man as he whose name graces this article, but by possessing the knowledge of one fact connected with him, and making it known, a man pays a tribute to worth and excellence, and a compliment to himself. It is an honour of which any man might be proud, to have known personally, and almost intimately, such a man and such an artist as LAWRENCE; and a highly pleasing task to be the chronicler of even one of his many virtues.

Like Wilkie, Lawrence was the most accessible man in the world, and the readiest upon all occasions to give his aid to the young and aspiring members of his profession. He was sufficiently a man of the world to speak with caution to those who he was not certain could be trusted with the whole truth; but to those of an opposite character who desired his opinions without disguise, he was open and communicative to a degree rarely found, even among the most patient and

liberal; and, in addition to this, he had a delicate mode of conferring obligations, almost his own.

For many years, during my long residence at Bristol, I had occasional correspondences and interviews with him, which were the means of bringing out many beautiful traits in his character; and it is no small punishment and just reproof to my unmethodical habits, that all his letters, except one, are lost.

In the heyday of my youthful spirit and ambition, I remember well how much I was struck with the extremely modest tone of these communications, and the diffidence with which he always spoke of his own achievements in art and his position in life. When I commenced a course of Lectures on the Arts of Design at the Bristol Literary and Philosophical Institution, in the year 1824 (I think), I was anxious to claim the merit (to which I still consider myself entitled) of being the first person who had attempted any lectures on the subject of art in the provinces, and I wrote to Sir Thomas to be confirmed in my pretensions. He complimented me upon my undertaking, and offered me some advice on the necessity of handling the subject, of what I called "popular ignorance," with some tenderness, and which I fear was thrown away upon me. For when I made a visit to London, and called on Sir Thomas, to read him some scraps of my lucubrations, before I had proceeded far, he put his hand upon my shoulder, and, smiling, remarked in his own gentle way, "You must have had a good-natured audience to bear that:" an opinion I have since fully fallen into.

About this period a local satire made its appearance, written by my witty and highly talented friend, the "Sketcher of Blackwood," which I had the credit of, no dishonourable burthen to bear, in which some well-merited praise is bestowed upon Lawrence. I sent him a copy of it; and it appears, from the letter which acknowledged the receipt of it, another subject must have been mentioned, a reference to which exhibits his good-heartedness, and the readiness with which he stepped forward to give his assistance wherever it was required.

I give this letter, with the omission of names, and am glad and thankful to the friend who has preserved it.

"My dear Sir,

Russell Square, June 5. 1826.

"You, perhaps, guess at the many professional engagements, and business connected with them, which occupy me at this period of the year, and will accept them as a fair excuse for my not sooner answering your obliging letter and amusing present. Amusing is much too light a word to express the degree or kind of pleasure which it afforded me; but, indeed, I am restrained from a higher expression of its merits, by the too flattering mention of my own name. I wish I could feel that I deserved it; yet I may truly say that the natural tendency of my thoughts and wishes is to do so, and to show that gratitude to Providence for my own success, which should lead me to assist others,

who, with equal talent, though in other departments of art, have been less fortunate in their career. Some of the names mentioned, as either lovers of art, or professors in it, are new to me. Those of the objects of satire are judiciously and delicately concealed. The benevolent spirit, as well as the vivacity, — the strong sense and wit that are so conspicuous in the work must soften, even to them, the pain of any unpleasant feeling, and give it a more general success than usually attends an effort of local and temporary nature. May I not, as his *distant* townsman, know the name of the author? Cannot Mr. Rippingille make me acquainted with his person, by sending me a slight sketch of him?"

Sir Thomas here speaks with great tenderness of an artist who had just then been seriously ill, and whom he had been then to visit. Upon one of his pictures, which he saw upon this occasion, he remarks, —

"I saw again, with increased admiration, his picture of —, and the first that he exhibited at the British Institution. The latter has beauties in it that were too much lost when in that gallery. 'Tis an exquisite work; and I most sincerely regret that my expenditure this year has, some way or other, been too large to admit of my requesting to make it companion to another fine work that I was fortunate enough to secure.

"You will do me a particular kindness by giving me the direction of ——. If you are on intimate terms with her, and know that her situation requires assistance from the Royal Academy\*, prevail on her to write another statement of it, attested (so our forms demand) by some respectable person or persons acquainted with it (no sanction would be more effectual than your own), and send it either to me, as president, or to Mr. Howard, our secretary, in Newman Street. Immediately on the close of the exhibition cases of this nature are taken into consideration; and hers, should she determine to offer it, will then be one of the first attended to.

"I have the pleasure to be,

"My dear Sir,

"Your very faithful servant,

"E. V. Rippingille, Esq.

"THOS. LAWRENCE.

"Bristol."

It is almost unnecessary to add, that the lady in question was successful in her application; and I believe is, at the present hour, in the yearly receipt of a bounty arising from the small fee paid by the public for the annual purchase of pleasure, instruction, and taste.

At that fatal period, which deprived the world of such a noble ornament as Sir Thomas Lawrence, it was my good fortune to witness a striking instance of that consideration for rising talent, as well as

\* I cannot help remarking here that the unostentatious and silent way in which large sums are annually expended for benevolent purposes by the Royal Academy, are as honourable to that institution as it is disgraceful to those who are ever mounthing its faults, upon all occasions, to overlook its merits.

another example of that delicate mode of enforcing favours which so strongly characterised him.

Knocking at his door one morning, I took the liberty to take with me, to see the gallery, a young artist who has since distinguished himself. As usual, we were shown into the room in which visitors were received, and the next moment were feasting our eyes with the beautiful examples of art it contained. While we were doing this, the servant who had taken my name into the painting-room, came to ask me down stairs into a private apartment, and in a minute after Sir Thomas came down, dressed for going out. The usual greeting passed, and Sir Thomas remarked, "I saw as I left my room a gentleman looking at the pictures, did he come with you?" "Yes," I replied, "I brought him to see your works, and also that he might receive a word of encouragement and advice from you; he springs from Bristol, and is a very clever fellow. He has painted several small subjects of figures, has a good feeling for colour, and the best conception of character I have seen in any body." "Indeed," responded Sir Thomas, "that is high praise from you. Has he brought any specimen with him?" "No, Sir Thomas," I said; "I did not wish him to do so without first asking your leave; but I should like very much that you should see some of his doings." Seeing that my real object was to get my friend an opportunity for showing his pictures to Sir Thomas; and seeing me hesitate while framing an apology for asking even a quarter of an hour from his laborious life, he at once relieved me by remarking, in the tone of one who solicited a favour, "I *should* like very much indeed to see what he has done. Perhaps you can explain to him that I am so much occupied as not to have *much* time to spare. I can't make him a visit; but if he can make it convenient to bring any little picture here I will give him my opinion and advice most freely; but I fear it must be as early as eight o'clock in the morning."

My reply was, "A thousand thanks to you, sir; and now, as you are prepared for going out, I will not detain you another moment. I am delighted to see that the hard fag you undergo does not injure your health. I think you are looking as well, or better, than I have seen you for many years." The reply to this remark was, "Thank God, I feel as well as I ever felt in my life." Then fastening coloshes over his shoes, he said, "I am going in the direction of Pall Mall; can I give you a lift?"

It is a painful reflection to me, and sad to remember, that this was my last interview, and these were the last words I ever heard him speak. The uncertainty of life is very strongly pointed out by a reference to appearances so deceptive indicating health and vigour. Poor Lawrence died in less than one week from the period of my visit. The world will long lament him.

## THE ARTS IN ENGLAND.

14. Buckingham Street, Adelphi, April 22. 1843.

MY DEAR RIPPINGILLE,

As deeds are always to be preferred to words, I think it better to offer you something for your magazine, than to content myself with telling you how much I approve of your project. I venture to hope, from the tone of impartiality you have adopted, a firm reliance upon your talents, integrity, and sincerity of purpose, that your work will soon become a source of honour and advantage, a valuable ally in the cause of art, and of benefit to the profession at large. You will find my contribution a kind of rhapsody of loose thoughts, hastily strung together, with little to recommend it but the feeling by which it was dictated. Print it, curtail it, or return it to

Yours very truly,

WM. ETTY.

At a period like the present, when the Government are at last awakening to a sense of the importance of the arts to the greatness and prosperity of a country, it may not be irrelevant to inquire why the arts of England are kept out of the church, and why the English artist is left to die "without benefit of clergy." Is it that these gentlemen are afraid the pictures would *divide* the homage already somewhat too lavishly offered to "popular preachers?" and do they fear the eloquence of the pencil might divert the mind from that of the pulpit? Whatever be the cause, the effect is most unfortunate, for it is an undeniable fact, that the arts in any country *have never risen* to their *highest* moral elevation, *nor ever can*, unless connected with the religion of the country. The *rejection* of the noble offer of the artists in Sir Joshua Reynolds and Barry's time, to decorate the cupola of St. Paul's *gratuitously*, is, I believe, fully well known, besides which, the following circumstance has recently occurred:—A fine picture, of large dimensions, suitable for a church, by the late Henry Thomson, R.A., was left by the will of the late Sir Francis Chantrey, R.A., to be offered as a gift to a church; it was refused acceptance! It was then offered to a *second* church, but by *both* resolutely refused!! The picture was "The Raising of Jairus' Daughter."

But the time is approaching, and not far distant, when this state of things *must* give way to a better, in which the genius of English art, no longer cramped by the absurd prejudices which keep it out of the pale of the church, will expand with its opportunities, and the subjects of inspiration given to it, and the Artist will take his stand amongst the benefactors of his country, because he will be one of its moral regenerators.

I am a sincere lover of my country, and would fain believe what her most specious flatterers tell her that she is, the most enlightened, the most moral, and the most happy of nations; but alas! my experience contradicts the assertion. I see this, my beloved country, deluged with crime as with a flood; if there is a crime of a deeper dye than others, it is to be

found amongst us. When I see a population, a great proportion of its lower classes, in a dreadful state of physical and moral destitution, given to habits of intemperance and depravity, and this not confined to the lower classes alone, but spreading far and wide to the others, where, I ask, is our boasted pre-eminence above our neighbours? where is that great prop and bulwark of my country, a moral and healthy population? But we have the Bible, they tell us. So we have, and I am sorry we make so bad a use of it; "where much is given, much will be required." Instead of wasting our time and treasure on foreign missions, let us apply the sickle to the ripe harvest of vice at home; instead of converting the Pagans and Hottentots abroad, let us first mind those at home. I could find *a few* of both here. I venerate the man who first established *home missions* (Rev. Baptist Noel, I believe,)—he applied the axe to the right tree. Why should not the House of God be made as glorious as the house of man, and even much more so? That awful Omnipresence, from which nothing can escape, whose benevolence and bounty not only gave us being, but also gives us every thing that makes that being desirable, is surely the most inspiring of all themes, the most elevating of all influences! The lessons he inculcates for our own good, the most desirable to be impressed on the mind and heart, by all capable methods, whether of precepts, illustrated by pencil, pen, or tongue; the Source of all glory, goodness, love, and beauty,—should His temple be a desert? Should His temple be left naked and unadorned, who scatters his bounty and beauty abroad over the earth and universe with so unsparing a hand? We have the best authority for believing, that it was His pleasure his temples of old, those built by David and Solomon, should be made "all glorious within," by the cunning artificer; they were "painted with vermillion," covered with "carved work" and the "gold of Ophir." The Sanctum Sanctorum, the Holy of Holies, must have been a gorgeous display of ancient art; and though God does not despise the devout aspirations of the soul, where none of these glories exist, yet still more effect, like that of ceremonies in religion, has a certain majesty that delights. "Ceremonies in religious worship, may of themselves, and abstractedly taken, be of no use and of no moral tendency; but if considered as appertaining to the mental act, they are not only the expression of that act, but they excite it, prepare the mind for it, and become a useful example to others."

Whoever, possessing a spark of sensibility, can enter one of our glorious Gothic cathedrals, without feeling at once the sacred influence of the place, his soul, at once softened, subdued and elevated, while the lofty windows are shedding their dim religious light and thousand colourings on the sun-lit pavement; then let the choir, accompanied by the organ, pour its rich flood of melody through the magnificent pile and along its vaulted roof, and while its hallelujahs are echoing through its beautiful and long drawn aisles and cloisters holy—let pictured glories on the walls, trumpet-tongued, awake the sinner, awe the vicious, encourage the virtuous, tell of justice and judgment, mercy, pardon and peace—now melting to pathos, now raising to

ecstasy; then let the sweet truths and balms of gospel light be poured in from the pulpit by eloquence *they* alone can inspire. Its healing influences thus applied, would soon be felt and acted upon—their effects would soon tell on the minds and manners of the people: Religion, instead of making a cold appeal, would become attractive; people would seek it as a pleasure and delight; we should not then so often see, as we do now, on the two great Christian festivals, Christmas and Easter, the drunkard reeling home on those sacred mornings, stopping at each gin-shop on his way, marked with every characteristic of profligacy; and the still more disgusting sight—the intoxicated female, unable to proceed, in tattered and dirty dress and habiliments; the crowds at the door of gin palaces, the slamming of that door which swings so glibly on its hinges, and from which the paint is rubbed by the frequent push; the Babel tongues within, the noisy brawl, the dirt, the filth of human degeneracy!

In fine, then, I would enlist the arts in the service of God, and our church. I would give them their highest—their *only* chance of *true* elevation. I would make the house of the Lord so attractive, so inspiring, so ennobling, that Vice would shut up her temples in despair for want of votaries. Gratitude, love, all that makes great or glorious human nature, all that fans the “spark divine” that is within our breasts, instead of being smothered and put out by what is too much “of the earth, earthy,” should be encouraged; all that can entice, persuade men to be better, to see their true interests and that of their species, all that is intellectual, spiritual, and refining, should be excited in that great cause, which, while it contributes to our own individual happiness, still more promotes that of our country, and the whole human race:—

“I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat,  
I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink,  
Naked, and ye clothed me,  
Sick and in prison, and ye came unto me,” &c. &c.

Let these acts of mercy be portrayed in our churches: they will speak a language all can understand; they address themselves to the *hearts* of men, and be assured the response will be within. They will be sermons by lines and colours only, instead of words. Thus a mighty moral, as well as a national good would be accomplished, by means in themselves meritorious and exalting.

In foreign countries the artist is excited by premiums, protection, and promotion; by employment by “church and state; his patriotism and energies are called into action by princes and people; his practice has “ample room and verge enough;” he is not denied access to their holy temples as with us, where “the door is shut” against us. The church and the palace alike call for his skill; noble inspiring subjects are given him, and the labour of his hand, keeping pace with the energies of his mind, reflect back on the employer, as well as the employed, a portion of the lustre they both shed on their country.

What is the case with the English artist? Struggling with every difficulty and against every prejudice, unassisted by most, *save that*



*enlightened few of our nobility and gentry*, who, with a generous and noble feeling, make an exception to the rule; denied access to the church, uncalled for by public companies to decorate their public halls, delving at portraits for bread, or painting pretty cabinet pictures to catch the eye of the buyer, — wasting his energies on trifles, a sort of Hercules at the distaff, with powers, if properly called forth, and given *fair play* to, equal to any (and who, with his limited opportunities, has accomplished perhaps *more* than any), he too often sinks the victim of disappointment and neglect.

“ Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bears;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

The opportunity is denied him of rescuing his country from the malignant and unfounded stigma of foreigners, who, jealous of our greatness and power in other respects, affect to deny our capacity for the arts.

To conclude, *besides* that silent, secret, and deep-felt homage of the heart, without which all other sacrifice is vain, I would devote the noblest of all human efforts to the noblest of all human purposes.

WM. ETTY.

#### LETTER FROM E. H. BAILY, ESQ., R. A.

MY DEAR RIPPINGILLE,

I HAVE read with great attention and considerable pleasure the first number of “The Artist and Amateur’s Magazine.” You have justly observed “that no man who is anxious for the welfare of art can perceive any movement made in its favour without a feeling of honest exultation and real satisfaction.” I therefore congratulate you on the appearance of your work, because I really consider the plan, as explained in your address to the reader, is an excellent one, and calculated to prove not only agreeable but highly useful.

I have long been aware of the manifold advantages which would open to artists in general by the influence of a periodical devoted to the real interests of art, if put under the guidance of those two great agents, too little employed in human concerns, honesty and common sense, the true philosophy of all things, and conducted by a person fully acquainted with the subject theoretically as well as practically. Both are requisite; for theory without practice is less available than practice without theory.

That you are equal to the undertaking, at all events in one department, I can fully testify; but I must at the same time say, that I feel convinced no one person can be found who unites in himself the many qualifications absolutely necessary for adequately carrying out all the ramifications of the plan you have laid down. The task is Herculean, mentally as well as bodily.

Moreover, although PAINTING may find in you a fit representative, an able critic, and a judicious instructor, SCULPTURE and ARCHITEC-

TURE are branches of art of so much importance that they demand an advocate to plead their cause, and a PROFESSOR to point out their merits and various excellences. Let me urge you, therefore, to call to your aid some one for each of these two grand departments, who is equally competent to further the grand object you have so nobly begun. Depend upon it, however highly a man is gifted, and whatever energies he may possess, the whole labour and anxiety attendant upon a monthly publication will be found too much for him. I cannot promise much assistance, but such as I can give in a desultory way you shall have most willingly. Wishing you every possible success,

I remain very truly yours,

E. H. BAILY.

10. Percy Street, 24th April, 1843.

#### REPORT OF MR. BARRY.

A REPORT has been put forth by this gentleman which gives his views of the mode in which the new Houses of Parliament ought to be decorated. This report is very ably drawn up, and is marked by the intelligence of practical good sense, the characteristics of a cultivated taste, and the knowledge of an artist. The means recommended appear highly judicious, and well calculated to carry out the enlightened intentions and admirable plan of the committee appointed by Her Majesty for advancing the present condition, and elevating the character, of British art. Mr. Barry is evidently sensible of the proper and true use of ornament, which is no mean acquisition.

The philosophy and application of ornament is a subject which has received but very little investigation, but upon which it would be possible to say a good deal. The *Goths* were the people of all others who appear to have had a proper understanding of its real character, and the mode of employing it. The best examples in classic times, and it must be acknowledged that there are many which are highly beautiful, fall short, nevertheless, of the consistency, the variety, and the unity which belong to Gothic. The decorations of Pompeii are defective and meagre, and utterly devoid of a capability of being combined, or of affording any principle which can guide in their use. In Gothic architecture the employment of ornament appears to have been reduced to a perfect science. There can be little doubt but that posterity will, while regarding the present as an era in the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture, give due honour to those who originated, and who are employed in carrying out, the noble plan of the commission. The details of Mr. Barry's report suggest the idea of a fairy tale, and, filling the fancy with rich and abundant imagery, we might almost doubt of the reality, if the magnificent pile which has sprung up on the margin of the river, did not convince us to the contrary.

## REPORT OF THE SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

THE School of Design at Somerset House, now held in the *locale* of the *old* Royal Academy, was instituted between three and four years ago for the purpose of instructing artizans (not artists) in the art of drawing, which after READING and WRITING is the next necessary acquirement. The arts of design have so direct an influence upon the manufacturing, mechanical, and useful arts generally, that it appears matter of surprise they should have remained so long neglected, and that this enlightened and progressive country should have been the last to see their utility and importance. It was not to be expected on the first establishment of the school that the plan of instruction adopted should be perfect. The mere exercise and improvement of the hand and eye are not sufficient in themselves, although these are important matters; but they are slow and uncertain agents when they are not put under the guidance of the mind. It is an axiom of experience as well as wisdom, that ALL EXCELLENCE IS THE RESULT OF SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE, from the highest to the lowest operation of human skill and endeavour. Some men are fortunate enough to have the power of educating their own minds, and perhaps these are the persons who shine most; and next to them in importance, are those who are best educated. In the absence of this happy faculty, means must of necessity be adopted by which the mind can be led on, and taught how to apply the acquirements of the senses. It is of very little use to teach people the mere art of drawing: this the general opinion of the world fully confirms, since it is viewed and considered but as a mere accomplishment; and, as a matter of course, it was for a long time thought superfluous and useless to the artizan. The improved good sense of the world has at length seen the utility of the study, and it appears by the report that some amendment in the system pursued is about to be adopted. A course of lectures well adapted to the demands of the occasion is certainly a most desirable measure; but a well digested series of elementary examples, accompanied by explanatory text, is calculated to effect still more important results. In constructing an efficient system of education, many hands must be employed; it is impossible that the requisite knowledge can be possessed by one person. Perhaps the best mode to pursue would be to call forth prize essays by practical men on every branch of industry to which the Fine Arts—painting, modelling, and designing—are applicable, and then to give these detached parts into the hands of some accomplished artist to consider, arrange, and dispose in such a manner as best to come under the influence, and within the guidance and control, of the principles of art. Nothing of the sort has ever yet been attempted in any country, but the course is a clear one, and the results certain; and, with such influence brought to bear upon the mechanical talents, the industry, and perseverance of British artizans, great and commanding advantages could not fail to be the consequences.

THE  
ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S  
MAGAZINE.

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A  
Glance at the contemplated Pictorial Adornment  
OF  
THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

AN ESSAY IN PARTS,

RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED TO THE GENTLEMEN OF HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSION.

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PART THE THIRD.

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"It will be readily admitted by candid and reflecting minds, that to form a complete judgment in art, the practical experience of the professor should be united with the theoretic science of the connoisseur. To weigh accurately and dispassionately, through all the relations of subject, conception, composition, and execution, the respective merits of works which approach nearly to an equipoise of pretension, demand, perhaps, the steadiest hand of justice, and the nicest scales of taste.

"A tribunal which should have to pronounce judgment in this great cause, involving, not only, the fame and fortunes of individuals, but as far as relates to the arts, the character of the nation itself, ought to be constructed with some attention, and composed of such persons as are not only *conspicuous for their knowledge of art, but capable of distrusting and desirous of assisting that knowledge.*"— *Outlines of a Plan for the National Encouragement of Historical Painting*, by Sir Martin Archer Shee, P. R. A.

The present month brings with it a very important crisis for the honour and character, and perhaps for the fate, of British art. Those who regard its productions but as pleasing trifles, and the exercise of it but as one of the modes by which men display their ingenuity, and seek the means of existence, will pass it over with indifference. But those who regard art as a mark of civilisation, as an evidence of taste, as a means of national distinction, and as a source of happiness and

rational enjoyment, — as a product of human ingenuity whose influence tends to refine the mind, to mend the heart, to polish the manners of men, to lessen and check the encroachment of gross and sensual pleasures, will view and reflect upon the results of the present month with thoughts and feelings of a very different character.

Any decision formed upon any part of the plan contemplated for the great national work of the adornment of the new Houses of Parliament by British artists, cannot fail of being attended with very important consequences, even though that part be but a small portion of the whole grand project.

The first indication of a judgment founded upon the merits of the specimens presented in competition, will at once inspire or frustrate the hopes which have been formed; and whatever attends upon this, or follows, will be seriously influenced by the event.

A decision, to be SATISFACTORY, must be JUST. It is now too late, although we are but in the world's nonage of improvement, to trust to some of the old methods of stopping the current of men's thoughts, and stifling their voices. Even taste, the last quality of enlightenment, is on the advance, and is beginning to insist on its privileges. It will not do now to attempt to quiet the murmur of popular dissatisfaction by a *hush* from the mouth of authority. It will be a vain attempt to baffle conviction by the mere force of high-sounding names. It is neither the importance of station in society, nor the authority of those favoured or fortunate in the profession which can stand against the force and effect of public impression. The time has been when the popular feeling was too little interested in such a momentuous matter as the present to be capable of any movement, however important and urgent might be the appeal made to it; but happily that time is fast yielding under the influence of our bettered condition. Nothing short therefore of a fiat based upon the strictest principles of justice can meet with public applause, or escape that reprobation which all men fear and find difficult to palliate, even though it originate by mistake, in the midst of the best intentions.

On the score of integrity, the light of the sun itself is not more bright and satisfactory. No man who values his own character will put forth the shadow of a doubt as to the perfect purity of purpose and sincerity of wish to act impartially and well of those whose task it will be to decide; but every individual who is capable of referring to what has taken place in similar situations must be anxious for the results; while the few who can justly appreciate the mighty difficulties of the undertaking may be excused if they fear.

A pure and perfect judgment in art is made up of so many parts and particulars, is the result of so much national aptitude, such long experience, and such deep meditation, that it is impossible to define or even to convey a comprehensive notion of it by any thing less than a long and elaborate disquisition. Perhaps, could it be clearly pointed out, the office of a judge would be one which a conscientious man would rather shrink from than willingly accept. A conscientious

discharge of obligations may be enough for individual and private purposes, but for public and national objects it is not sufficient that a man acts up to the best of his ability, it is incumbent upon him to see that every pains has been taken to render that ability equal to the task it has to perform. He ought not only to look to the opportunities he had had, but to the use he has made of them; and very few indeed will be the number of those who can turn to the amount of their experience with satisfaction. If it be difficult in morals to discriminate nicely, and to define with certainty and unquestionable clearness, the right and the wrong, how much more difficult must it be to adjudicate in the cause of taste. The one is a science to which the study of mankind is directed both by choice and necessity, the other an art which is but of partial interest, whose principles are neither defined, studied, nor recognised. There are subjects of so general and popular a character, that the community at large may be considered as one great mass of students and practitioners in them. There are others to which but a small sect devote themselves;—for the first, men are sufficiently well qualified in common one with the other; for the last, nature ordains but a few.

It would be a puerile and mistaken sort of delicacy which, in the investigation of a difficult and important subject, would tempt us to blink these facts, as if we feared to learn their full consequence and the sacred obligations they impose, or to regard them with an indifference that is content to leave to chance the ultimate results. To be left unacquainted with the danger that threatens us is certainly not the best condition we can be placed in for protecting ourselves against it. It will follow as a matter of course, as well as prudence, that every one who has difficulties to contend with will do the best he can to arm himself against them. In speaking of the difficulties of such a trial as that in question, the President has remarked, that “they who believe themselves competent to such a duty are perhaps the last persons that should be appointed to it, for confidence springs not from the extent of our knowledge, but from the narrowness of our views.” An enlightened mind will therefore not disdain the opinions, or turn a deaf ear to the suggestions which are made in the pure spirit of good intention, and are backed by some thought and experience, and consequently with some acquaintance with the subject. Before proceeding to those considerations which peculiarly come within the province of the painter, it may be admissible to inquire whether it be not possible to adopt some method which is calculated to guard against the possibility of error in the mode of ADJUDICATION, without pretending in any way to investigate or pronounce an opinion on the subject. A fact may be referred to which is known to all the world, — that in France a Court of *Cassation*, or ultimate appeal, exists, and is considered as essential to the ends of justice. Might it not be possible in so important a matter to allow an appeal to another tribunal, provided the decision should not be *generally* satisfactory. There certainly would be nothing discreditable to any of the parties concerned to give

judgment in the following manner:—"We consider the works of A. B. and C. D. to be best entitled to the highest premiums."

If such judgment were PERFECTLY JUST, I feel the strongest conviction that it would receive the support of the whole profession; if it were questionable a dissatisfaction would naturally arise, and admitting an appeal to be made, the decision of another tribunal might confirm or annul such judgment.

It appears to me that nothing could be easier than this, by a method at once well known, proved, and satisfactory.

Impanel a jury of twelve artists, giving to the person most concerned a right to challenge any he might disapprove, and let their verdict decide.

I think it is a point well worthy of consideration whether or not it would not be advisable to add to the number of the gentlemen who have taken upon themselves one of the weightiest offices which could well devolve upon erring mortals.

It is a maxim of more than ordinary sagacity and experience that "in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom." Certain it is that one man may influence two others with half the difficulty that he can bias four, and again, six will oppose more resistance to the will of one man than four. Six non-professional and six professional persons are the smallest number that ought to have the management of so momentous a matter. No difficulties could attend the employment of so many in any way; they are readily to be found, and could, with the greatest facility, act individually and together. I hold most tenaciously to the proposition I have propounded, and in spite of the jealousies *said* to exist amongst artists, I feel convinced *that if the decision be just it will be satisfactory*, and the contrary.

Having said thus much on the mode of adjudication, I may be allowed, I hope, as one deeply interested in the study as well as the honour and the fate of art, to call attention to some points which it appears to me are of vital importance, both nationally and individually, and which demand the closest scrutiny and the most mature deliberation.

I commence my remarks with an extract from a work but little known even amongst artists, and of no interest whatever as society is constituted, out of the pale of the profession. It will serve as an introduction to the first grand consideration of the principles upon which a pure and perfect judgment of the works which will be brought under examination must be formed, since it embraces one of *the* very highest quality of criticism, and may be regarded as the surest guide:—

"When man is the object which the painter aspires to represent, it is beneath *his* intellectual and moral dignity that the human form should be displayed as a mere beauty of nature, for his chief excellencies does not consist in this. Even corporeal action, however applied, does not sufficiently characterise him. It ranks him but as an instrument. It is man, the impassioned, the reasoning, self-

“ruling power alone, whose actions are interesting to beings of a similar high character. No art which does not imply this nature in the agent, or produce a lively consciousness of it in the mind of the spectator, is really worthy, or indeed capable, of the high interest which this art at its summit is qualified to excite, or of the exertions of those talents or endowments which its votaries are required to possess.”

Mere beauty of form is not the highest object of art. This many writers upon the subject have intended to demonstrate or imply; but Mr. Richter has here put the idea into a more clearly defined and intelligible form than perhaps any other has done.

As has been said, it is not the material, but the intellectual man that is wanted. It is not man represented as acting by the agency of his bones and muscles, but under the influence of his mind, his reason, his passion, motives, and impulses.

This, however, does not come close enough to define the peculiar faculties and power which ought to characterise the artist, and mark his works with that true stamp of excellence of which they are susceptible.

Mere draftsmanship, about which so much has been said, although the highest mechanical excellence of the painter, is a quality infinitely below some others whose importance have been less vaunted, and are far less generally recognised and understood. Draftsmanship is certainly amenable to study, and more or less within the reach of every body; some other excellences are the gift of Heaven alone, and consequently they fall to the lot of a few.

APPROPRIATE ACTION AND EXPRESSION comprise and embrace more real artistical difficulties, and demand far higher qualifications than the most perfect draftsmanship that the most highly-gifted artist was ever known to possess.

As an illustration is often found more explanatory than the most laboured description, let us suppose the figure which artists commonly use for hanging draperies upon, and which is called a *lay-figure*, capable of being put into any position of which the human frame is susceptible. The person who could adapt the posture of such a figure to accord exactly with a given sentiment—who could, for instance, put it into the position in which Christ stood or sat in delivering his sermon upon the Mount, or any similar subject, is more highly qualified for the noblest achievements of art than the most accurate draftsman that ever existed. In many of the finest works of Raphael there are abundant inaccuracies, both in general design and in detail, to be discovered, and what an ordinary observer can detect, a great painter must have been able to rectify; but the excellencies and beauties of such works exist independent of any aid which could have been afforded by the faulty parts had they been ever so perfect. Thus also in the figures and portraits of the early masters in particular, a book of *life and intelligence* is often found, allied with forms at once faulty and feeble.

It is not MERE ACCURACY OF FORM, therefore, or a display of the



skill of the draftsman, that claims the first consideration, and merits the highest honours. The mere naked form, however accurately given, exhibits only one excellence of artistical qualification, is inferior to some other, and at best but a display of mechanical dexterity. Anatomy is a knowledge necessary to the painter, but its importance is very much overrated. John Bell\*, the anatomist, declares that having examined attentively the best statues of Italy, he could find no example in which an anatomist would not immediately detect errors: he exclaims loudly against the affectation of anatomical knowledge in the painters and sculptors, and declares that the grand use of anatomy, is as a "corrector, but no more." A mere anatomical display, therefore, will deserve as little attention as an exhibition of forms, lines, and masses, unassociated with sense and subject.

The various tastes and capabilities of artists will naturally lead and direct them to different departments of art, and to a display of qualities to which they feel themselves equal or best able to sustain. The claims of every aspirant will demand, and be entitled to, a distinct and deliberate consideration.

To weigh these with impartiality will of course be a laborious task, and with the highest qualifications in the judges, will still involve very serious difficulties. The plainer therefore the course can be made, the better for all parties.

In the liability of being carried away by false impressions, and beguiled by circumstances over which the wisest and most wary find it hard to exercise the desired control, it is well to take advantage of whatever can be offered as a guide and a safeguard against error.

The first point of importance to be considered is, the CHOICE OF SUBJECT made by the painter. "There is often more merit," observes Sir Martin Shee, "in the choice of a subject, than in the execution of it."

There is a pretty general notion, which prevails even among painters themselves, that no artist is to be questioned on the choice of his subject, but that he has right to paint any one which may suggest itself to his fancy. Circumstances certainly modify cases, so that an artist may often find a plea for what he does; but, in a general way, the artist who undertakes a subject which is devoid of capability, intractable, and sterile, offers a direct proof of the want of one of the most important qualifications for his pursuit, a bad compliment to his own understanding, and certainly requires the very best excuse that circumstances can make in his favour.

The choice and *capabilities* of a subject come so completely and peculiarly within the province of the painter, that, perhaps, but little is to be hoped from the interference and judgment of the most talented persons out of the profession. That little, however, is worth making an effort to obtain; and those to whom these remarks are addressed will not neglect to give attention to a point of consideration which

\* See "Observations on Italy."

makes the more urgent demands in proportion to the difficulties it involves.

It would be an easy, but an ungracious task, to strengthen the propriety of these remarks, by a reference to what has been done by some of the cleverest minds that have been directed that way. Abundant instances might be found, in which subjects for pictures have been recommended by men of first-rate talents, which are glaringly absurd, and utterly unfit for the purposes of art.

SUBJECT, therefore, apart from every other consideration, ought to recommend the candidate.

THE MODE OF TREATMENT is the next consideration which involves all the grand merits and difficulties of the achievement.

THE MODE OF EXECUTION is the last and least considerable.

In the mode of treatment, forms and characters chosen with judgment and rendered with truth, are of the first importance; but their action and expression are matters alone capable of being made the *media* of the highest attributes of art, and the noblest qualifications of the artist, because, for such action and expression, no laws, rules, or principles, can be given which will serve as guides. As these outward manifestations have their origin in the soul of the being who is represented, the painter must turn to a similar source in himself, from which alone he can draw the materials and inspiration of his work. Such action and expression must fit and accord exactly with the sentiment intended to be conveyed, and this sentiment is not an arbitrary and wavering something which has uncertain and vague characteristics, however great may be the number of its modifications, but a determinate and well-defined essence, whose types and indications are interwoven with the essential conditions of existence itself.

It is the province of the painter to choose and to portray the strongest, most pure, and perfect of these, such as have escaped the detection of ordinary observers. If he be capable of doing this — of showing that his study and reflection has led him into regions of observation into which ordinary minds cannot penetrate, he will afford the highest satisfaction to those who look on and can appreciate his work, and claim the highest honours for himself as a great and meritorious artist: if he can do no more than reflect back upon the ordinary observer his own unqualified impressions, he is but a weak and insignificant aspirant for fame and favour.

It is in this particular that the loose free sketches and indication of thought and feeling which are to be found in the mere pen-and-ink outlines of Raphael and others, are so excellent and admirable, and not, as is vulgarly supposed, for any artistical excellence they *possess*; their excellence consists in the sentiment they *convey*. The means of conveying this sentiment is not correct drawing, or any other mere imitative nicety, but the indication, rather than the representation, of certain types of feeling, passion, sentiment, which belong to humanity, and which are of a character too pure, perfect, and delicate, to be seen in general, or felt but in an ordinary degree. It will be perceived

at once, that the completion, or finish, as we may call it, of such works as these referred to, belong to a lower and inferior operation of art. The first may be called the soul, the last the body of art.

This soul of art will therefore be looked for in the Cartoons offered to the judges, and will, no doubt, receive due consideration and a just appreciation.

In the mode of treatment, it is a very important point to consider whether the subject has been treated in a poetical, an artistical, or in a common matter-of-fact manner. If in a poetical way, the artist will have employed ALLEGORY, and given an impersonation of mere abstractions, which have no visible existence; his work, of course, is, in such case, to be judged by an appropriate and peculiar criterion. But if the subject has been treated in an artistical way, it will be based upon nature and the manifestations she gives out; no allowance is asked for the creation of fanciful forms and personages, whose prototypes are to be found only in the caprice of their inventor, but all will be real, solid, and legitimate art, — the deductions of deep thought, the offspring of correct feeling, close investigation, well-tryed experience, and consummate skill. The *subject* or *motive* furnished by the poet or historian, will have passed from its source through a new medium, by which it has not been distorted and lowered, but beautified and exalted by the peculiar means which have been employed to give it a second birth, and by the elaboration which has been bestowed upon it. This *metempsychosis* of art ought to be as perfect and distinct as the change which the worm undergoes in becoming a butterfly, except that the *motive* itself should still preserve its identity, and recall the subject in all its original truth, brightened and embellished.

It will readily be seen that the mere matter-of-fact treatment of a subject does not consist in a transmission of *souls*, but in a conversion of bodies — in a common vulgar change from one matter or material to another. With the ordinary artist and the common connoisseur this is quite enough. The first considers that all he has to do, is to render the story he handles from the language in vulgar use into the scarcely less vulgar language of his art; while the connoisseur satisfies himself that he has done enough when he has understood the intended connection between the two versions offered to him. Indeed, he will be more satisfied with a work of this sort than one of a higher character, since it does not require him to follow into regions where he has never set foot before, or to make any effort which puts him to the expense of thought and reflection.

There is no effort of art less worthy of the abilities of a real artist than the mere translation of *words* into *forms* and *colours*.

The next point of importance in the mode of treatment is COMPOSITION. This is an attribute of art, the nature of which is but very imperfectly understood, judging from the loose phraseology employed in describing it. We hear continually of the study and principles of composition, as if nature arranged the moods and appearances of her

emotions to suit the purposes and fit the conveniences of the painters. If six or any number of figures are to act together under the influence of so many passions and impulses, they must fall into so many positions, and form so many lines and masses, as will exactly balance and give to a composition the diversity it requires. Perhaps there is nothing which has led to so much downright fallacy, and the introduction of so much useless lumber into pictorial representations, as the allurements of composition; without referring to nature, the actions, positions, and looks she assumes under certain conditions and impulses, artists have been content to string together certain figures and shapes that combine to form agreeable lines, and present a varied and a pleasing aspect. Thus it would happen, that if Faith, Hope, and Charity had to be represented together, it would be of no importance as to what characteristics distinguish each severally, and give to either a shape and attitude peculiarly her own: they must of necessity bend, twist, present an aspect, and form lines suitable to the purposes of the painter. The disposal of heads, bodies, and limbs is always a difficulty, and when the best is done some sacrifice must inevitably be made to the *necessities of art*; but to found a representation of nature in her endless range of character upon these necessities and artificial wants of art, is an abomination and an evil attended with the worst of consequences. Nature it is certain has her own modes, and it is the duty of the painter to learn them; what he substitutes in their stead may be ingenious or clever, but it will be entirely artificial. It will, therefore, be an exceedingly easy matter, comparatively, to construct and put together an agreeable composition, when there is neither sense nor subject involved in it; when there is, the task is beset by far greater difficulties. When figures are employed which have no meaning, they may present their backs, fronts, or sides to the spectator, stand, sit, or lie, be foreshortened or seen at full length, just as the painter pleases, or the necessities of his composition demand; but where nature asserts her prerogative, and insists upon the truth, the matter assumes another character, and composition becomes not quite so easily managed.

Hazlitt has very justly remarked, that "most painters, in studying an attitude, puzzle themselves to find out what will be *picturesque*, and what will be fine, and never discover it. Raphael only thought how a person would stand or would fall *naturally* in such and such circumstances, and the picturesque and the fine followed as a matter of course. Hence the unaffected force and dignity of his style, which are only another name for truth and nature under impressive and momentous circumstances."

It will be necessary, therefore, to look closely to appearances, which are often specious and empty, and to see that a pleasing composition has the pith of sense and subject in it.\*

\* There is no possibility of persons being sufficiently on their guard against specious appearances. I know a talented sculptor who had to compete with others for executing the monument of a great man; after making a small figure in clay, he

The last point of consideration is EXECUTION. This is a quality of art of which the amateur, in a general way, knows nothing, and the connoisseur studies for his own particular purpose, to the entire exclusion perhaps of every other quality or attribute of art. With the latter it is no more than the penmanship of art; with the former it is a kind of graphic miracle which astounds and perplexes. A man who has worked for forty years will have acquired a certain dexterity and mode of handling his tools, which is seen in the effect produced, that it is in vain for any less experienced person than himself to attempt. Much in the same way that a barber, who straps a razor fifty times a day, will exhibit a dexterity to which the ordinary person, who performs that operation not more than three hundred and sixty-five times in a year, can make no approach. If such dexterity, therefore, be regarded as the principal excellence of a man's doings, either from its not being understood, or from its having been studied, and nothing else, a very erroneous judgment will be formed by both parties, neither of whom, it is clear, knows anything of the matter.

Execution is not in itself an evidence of what is good in art, but often an exemplification that a man has continued to do badly so long, that at last he has learnt to do with ease what costs another some pains. Execution has led many an artist astray, and is, therefore, likely enough to beguile those unacquainted with art. To be good, execution must carry with it the sentiment of the subject in which it is employed. This is very clearly and beautifully exemplified in the works of Rembrandt. The Bourgo-Masters and coarse characters of heads he painted are executed in a style at once rough and decisive, while many of his female portraits are touched with a lightness and

said, "now, I will just do that which will get me the job;" upon which he cut the head off the figure, for the better convenience of working it, and with a very fine tool modelled it into an exact likeness of the person to whom the monument was to be erected, and then replaced it. His model was presented among those of others, who never thought of making the small figure a direct portrait of the individual in question, and the consequence was that the commission was given to the sculptor who had done so, and who smiled and congratulated himself upon the innocent and successful trick he had practised.

In a recent decision, scarcely perhaps of importance sufficient to demand a notice, only that straws and trifles show the nature of currents as well as more consequential ventures; some influence of this sort must have operated where taste and judgment should have led. The old Art Union offered a small prize for a design for the heading of a catalogue; several were offered, and one was chosen. It is pretty, and perhaps was carefully drawn, but the *idea* it embodies, a figure crowning three others with a wreath, is hackneyed and common place in the extreme. Another conveys a beautiful thought, which, were it told in words, cut in stone, carved in wood, painted in colours, drawn in lines, traced upon the sand of a sea shore, or scratched upon a pane of glass, would be beautiful and intelligible still, it was "*Taste replenishing the lamp of Genius.*" I know not whether this thought be original or not, or even who was the author of it, but it had the fate which has attended many such originating in the same cause. To decide which of the two was the more deserving, it is not necessary to have *seen* the designs: one might have been very well drawn, and the other very ill, and this might have had a large share in deciding; but as regards the *thought* itself, there could have been no cause for one moment's hesitation.

delicacy no one would believe to have belonged to the same hand. The treatment, composition, and execution of the works of Salvator Rosa are equally characteristic of the subjects he painted. A smooth, even, and undeviating line surrounding a figure, can be only admissible in one class of subjects, and if applied to any other will give evidence of the artist's want of sense and understanding of his art. In a battle piece, the same sober, quiet, soft line which characterise a tender or a domestic scene, will be sadly out of place. A bold outline, so often recommended, can perfectly belong to none but a bold subject. Of these matters it is exceedingly difficult to form a just notion or a just estimate, nor perhaps is it less easy to judge of the worth of an artist's performance by the facility displayed. Apparent facility of execution is a very deceptive matter, and in mere outline has as little reference to the accomplished work as the making a pen has to writing the subject upon which it is to be employed.

This point of consideration is scarcely of sufficient importance to waste so many words upon, other than that it is important to guard against error and mischief in all ways. A pretty style of drawing is very likely to take with those who do not reflect how small is the connection between it, the conception, and the completion of a work of art. Most of all, however, likely to delude and deceive is the facility of execution, in which it will be often found that the commonest student in a school, who has had plenty of experience, frequently made necessary and obligatory by an incapacity to proceed beyond the first rudiments of his art, will, in this particular, be more than a match for artists of the highest intelligence and talent.

The next number of this work will appear after the fiat of the commission has been issued and made known to the world. The project itself is a most noble one, conceived in a spirit calculated to do immortal honour to those with whom it originated. It will be found, it is hoped, that artists have met the offer held out to them with the right feeling, and that their exertions will not only prove them worthy and anxious to merit, as well as to receive the rewards proposed, but that they will be found commensurate to the demands of the occasion and the expectations of the public. It has been a pleasing task hitherto to dwell upon the subject of the commission, to examine and to develope its merits, and to anticipate its results; to follow in the same strain of approbation will be a satisfaction, for the *perfect* expression of which language must be furnished with a new term!

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DEAR SIR,

Tunbridge Place, 2d May.

I HAIL with hopeful expectation the appearance of a monthly periodical, under the management of a competent hand, devoted to the interests of the Fine Arts. At the present moment, when so much attention is directed to the mechanical operation of drawing by

the schools of *design*, as they are questionably called — so much attention to cheap picture-making by art unions — and so much excitement raised by the programme of the commission for the decoration of the houses of parliament, it is of the greatest importance that the true principles of the fine arts should be placed before the public in a clear and distinct shape, so far as that is practicable, in the hope of preventing the movement which is making being in the wrong direction. A crisis is now at hand in which one false step may be fatal to the interests of the higher classes of art, and the only opportunity for their encouragement which has ever been offered in this country, may be lost without the hope of another arising. In a short time it will be universally known, that “every one who can write can draw;” it will then be discovered that drawing is not identical with design, and that schools of design, for the purpose of teaching mechanical drawing, is a misnomer that will produce mischief, for errors in words are sure to lead to errors in things. It will also be found ere long, that almost any one can make pictures, and a suspicion may arise, although now it is almost heresy to hint it, that picture-making is not the fine art by which Michael Angelo, Lionardo da Vinci, Raphael, &c., have immortalised themselves. But unless, in the mean time, the operations of the commission shall have called into action some of those higher powers of art which distinguished the great names I have mentioned, there is much reason to fear that the public, uninstructed to perceive the difference, may be led to consider the professors of the fine arts as only a better kind of handicraftsmen who have hitherto imposed upon their contemporaries as a class of superior beings; geniuses, and what not, much after the manner of the rain-makers among the Hottentots.

That the commission, by their programme for the cartoons, have fully done their part, so far as they have gone, is, I think, scarcely to be doubted; and that the judges, to whom the decision of the prizes is to be delegated, will do theirs, is to be hoped. And much, I conceive, lies within the capacity of your periodical, in diffusing accurate notions of what really constitute the higher principles of the art, of what ought to be aimed at by the artist, and what required by the commission or the judges, so that the public may be prepared to acquiesce in a just decision, however at variance with the present notions of picture connoissance on this account. It is, I think, singularly fortunate that the competition is confined to cartoons instead of pictures. The very name leads them to Raphael and a high class of art; and the objects produced will be so different to what the public are accustomed to see at exhibitions, that they are less likely to be biassed by any predilections in favour of a particular branch of picture-making, and therefore will probably be more open to receive legitimate impressions from the intellectual appeals which alone entitle painting to rank as a fine art.

The gentle hint of the commission: “The judges to be appointed to decide on the relative merit of the drawings, will, it is presumed, be disposed to mark their approbation of works, which, with a just

conception of the subject, exhibit an attention to those qualities which are more especially the objects of study in a cartoon; namely, precision of drawing founded on a knowledge of the structure of the human figure, a treatment of drapery uniting the imitation of nature with a reference to form, action, and composition, and a style of composition less dependent on *chiaro-scuro* than on effective arrangement," comprises all that the most sincere lover of the art can desire, if it be assumed, as I conceive it must be, that the intended *test* of capability for adorning the houses of parliament implied the *choice* of a high character of subject. For the term *precision* of drawing must be sufficient to guard the judges equally against the coarse\* outline found in the cartoons at Hampton Court, intended to guide the tapestry workers, which is by some considered a merit, though never found in undoubted drawings of Michael Angelo, Lionardo da Vinci, or Raphael, and against the laboured finish considered by others the *ne plus ultra* of art. And it must also include character, expression, and a living energy of action, as far removed from the studied gestures of the theatre as from the statue-like pose of the model or lay-figure. Precision must also include that selection and refinement of the forms of common nature that constitutes style, which again will be found in "the treatment of drapery uniting the imitation of nature with a reference to form, action, and composition;" while the concluding passage, "a style of composition less dependent on *chiaro-scuro* than on effective arrangement," must necessarily imply a story *well* told, completing the category of a work of the highest class in art.

If, therefore, the judges be disposed to act upon the hint thus given them, and award the prizes to those Cartoons which shall exhibit the best selected subjects (bearing in mind that the highest office of the art is to elevate and refine the feelings of the spectators), treated in the best manner, and with the best objects, instead of encouraging mere pieces of imitation or elaborate execution, the public will receive a lesson in taste which will not only be very advantageous to themselves, but will be most beneficial to the future prospects of art. The pretty bits of colour, and pretty bits of effect, may then be left to Art Unions and annuals; and the artist who has endeavoured to fit himself for the highest exercise of his profession may hope to be appreciated and encouraged, and to be singled out from the herd who degrade it to a trade — those useful hands, of whom Fuseli said the loom and the plough had been robbed by the gratuitous education afforded in drawing. Let it be remembered that Mr. D. L. Hay, by establishing an academy for drawing, for the purposes of his trade (house and ornamental painting), emptied his workshops of promising assistants to fill the streets of Edinburgh with starving so-called artists.

\* The writer of this article is not sufficiently explicit here, he does not mean the outline drawn by the hand of Raphael, but that which has been given to these works by other hands, namely, the *pricking and pouncing* resorted to for the purpose of guiding the tapestry workers. — Ed.



It is to be hoped that the judges will give to the public their reasons for awarding the prizes to the several Cartoons, and that they will not be content with *stat pro ratione voluntas*: that they will clear themselves from the accusation of Coleridge, of an "indisposition, nay, an angry aversion to think, even in persons who are most willing to attend, and on the subjects to which they are giving the most studious attention. To assign a feeling and a determination of will as a satisfactory reason for embracing or rejecting this or that opinion or belief, is of ordinary occurrence, and sure to obtain the sympathy and suffrages of the company." Then, if any erroneous views of the true principles of art, or any misunderstanding of the hint of the commission, have influenced the judgment, the "bane and antidote will be before us." The principles may be investigated and settled before authority shall have produced any injurious effect. And if the judges, though this can scarcely be supposed, shall be determined to set aside the hint of the commission altogether, and to adopt the principle of the German schools, that as the arts declined from the time of Raphael, owing to the greater progress made in the more fascinating portions of the executive department, we should reject all the advances made in the latter, and return to the crude intellectual appeals of the earlier painters, or adopt any other principle of judgment, they will at least stand acquitted of ignorance or partiality, and the public taste will not be so likely to be misled. If a *rifacciamento* of scraps from Raphael, or Michael Angelo, or any other of the old masters, obtain their approbation, in preference to an attempt to apply the principles developed by those masters, to the advanced state of knowledge and taste; or if the "bold outline" take precedence of that finer appreciation of form, to which we have been led by the antique sculpture, with which they were unacquainted, or if the laboured detail resulting from repeated experiment, and evincing the highly-prized *present* study, be rewarded in preference to that facility and freedom, which is the property of previous application, "the ready armour of the fray," and generally considered the test of the master, the public will not only be enabled to investigate the judgment with a view to future improvement, but there will be some consolation to the unfortunate candidates who may have endeavoured to unite the forms of the antique with the colour and execution of Titian and the expression of Michael Angelo, or who may have been working on any other apparently erroneous or unapproved principle.

And here I must say a word upon your objection to fresco, that it does not admit of alteration. I am quite willing to allow that great advances have been made in art as well as science by the results of experiment and even of accident; but I cannot doubt that the advances thus made in art have generated that determination to avoid all previous study, that scouting of all idea of fixed principles, which though it may have led to the great variety of the English school, too frequently justifies the remark of a foreigner upon one of our Exhibitions, "These, I suppose, are the works of amateurs," and opposes

an almost insurmountable barrier to the advance of the art in a high direction. The facility for alteration in oil, and the ready excuse for botching and bungling under the specious title of a "love of texture," has not only degraded the application of the arts, but lowered the general character of the profession. Any one who has an eye in his head and can get hold of a good example, may blunder out a piece of picture-making until he gets it pretty near the mark; but this is not the way Michael Angelo, Titian, or Reubens exercised their art. They conceived the subject, knew the forms, and with hands obedient to their minds produced what they intended at once, and without more alteration than the accidents arising from their implements and materials rendered necessary. Fresco will require this previous study; will teach the public that uneducated picture-makers are not artists; will compel the definition of the principles of the art; and should the decay of the works first executed in fresco upon the walls of the Houses of Parliament, be as rapid as in any instance that ever was known, the advantage to the art, and to the professors who had courage and energy to make themselves competent, would fully compensate for the loss of the works produced.\* Raffaele and Michael Angelo covered the walls which had previously exhibited the works of very able predecessors. I therefore trust the country will not throw away the present opportunity upon the principle of a young lady learning drawing at school, who throws away all hopes of permanent advance in the accomplishment, for the sake of having her "first drawing" hung up, framed and glazed, at home.

Your's, very truly,  
FRANK HOWARD.

\* The difference of opinion which appears here to exist between the editor and his correspondent, consists in the one speaking of the use and advantage of experiments, the other of its abuse. It can never be too often repeated, that the mode proposed in furtherance of the noble plan of the committee, whether fresco be ultimately adopted or rejected, is still the very best that could be devised for correcting the prevailing malpractices of the artist, and the misdirection of the public taste. Fresco is recommended, because it imperatively demands and insists on that being done, which *ought to be done* in oil painting, but which is often dispensed with, because it is possible to proceed without it. Nor is this all, for the facilities afforded in oil painting not only lead to the result of neglecting the necessary means, but often assumes the character of a merit in the eye of the vulgar. The daubing, blotching, and blundering, necessarily leads to that plastering and re-plastering which looks something like mastery. If a sufficiency of colour be loaded upon the canvas, so that it can be felt as well as seen, it is enough for certain *connoisseurs*, and when to a practised eye it is evident that the painter has again and again lost his way, been foiled and obliged to return, he is applauded for his bungling, whilst a picture which is *thinly painted*, and gives evidence that the subject had been well considered before it was begun, and was executed with the facilities of a prompt feeling, and a well-understood purpose, is pronounced to be timid, and devoid of masterly execution. Every painter knows the trick perfectly well, and how much it is worth; but it is not every one who will degrade his art and himself by an appeal to the wretched taste which praises and pays for such productions. It is a compliment to our brothers on the Continent that they despise and laugh at our affectation in this way, and ridicule it under the name of the "Stilo Mattone," the brick or the mason's style.—Ed.

## THE EXHIBITIONS.

ALL the annual picture exhibitions of the metropolis are now open, offering their invitations to visitors, and the usual provocations to criticism. The residents run to compare the productions of the present season with those of the past, and thus to estimate the progress of art. Crowds of happy people flock from the country and visit the picture galleries, as matters of course as well as curiosity. To the great mass of both the present is the past and the future; few seek or care for more than the hour's amusement. What has been seen is soon forgotten, and what is to come is rarely thought of. It is an important crisis, however, to many and many an artist: it is a moment which is anticipated with anxiety, and met too frequently with the saddest disappointment. To the *unprivileged*, the ardent and the anxious artist, it is the *experimentum crucis* of the year; to the fortunate the harvest, to the mass the "Feast of Fools," in which the hanging committees cut a conspicuous figure, by "playing such antic tricks" before the judgment-seat of sense and justice as make poor painters weep. A sufficient number of good people, anxious for the improvement of all that is bad and faulty in the world, have most industriously, laudably, and loudly said and sung the indiscretions, wants, and weakness of artists: it is to be wondered at that none have thought it worth their while to become the chroniclers of their virtues. — Can it be that they are so few? impossible: their patience and endurance are without a parallel in any other class of society. In almost every other pursuit men's privileges are pretty nearly equal; their chances are nearly on a par, and where wrong is done to them, there is *redress* at some price or other; but the painter is not favoured with any of these. In the ordinary way, the goods a man sends to market recommend themselves by their qualities alone. If they are of the current excellence, the purchaser is almost sure to find them, and they go off as a matter of course, unless, indeed, the market happens to be over stocked; the particular place in which they are exposed for sale makes very little difference, whether it is in the centre or on the sides, in the shops or upon the stalls; their own worth will recommend them; there are no particular stations to which a fraudulent *prestige* is attached, by which those disposed to buy are deluded by the notion that *there* they cannot be cheated, or buy what is utterly worthless; nor, in a general way, are there any dark and obscure corners or holes, in which good things are put, where no decent person would ever think of looking for any commodity worth his money or his attention. This never happens to the producers of what is good, useful, and agreeable, in the ordinary way: it belongs exclusively to the painter! He alone, of all others, is compelled to submit to have his feelings hurt, his talent insulted, his time thrown away, his fair expectations blasted, and perhaps his fortunes ruined. If he submits

to this, which he does often for the better part of his life, even until his capacity for enjoyment, and the opportunity of seeing those around him made happy, a still dearer wish, has passed away: if he goes on, year after year, renewing his exertions only again to be repulsed, his earnestness increasing, as the chance of justice and reward becomes less and less, has he not a claim at least to the virtue of patient endurance? How many unfortunate artists are there who, toiling by day and by night, in the solitude of their studios, deprived of the blessing of the bright sun-light and the invigorating influence of fresh air and exercise, gain strength, consolation, and perseverance, from the hopes they accumulate even in the trial, which this momentous period of the year lays prostrate, or perhaps crushes for ever. The work, upon which, probably, six or twelve months' labour has been bestowed, is sent to one of the public exhibitions to take its chance of being exhibited: it is either returned to the painter, *because there is no place for it*; or, if received, it is put into a situation in which *it cannot be seen*; or, if seen in such a situation, it is only to be dishonoured or depreciated. The loss and affliction which may, and which does, attend on such cases is incalculable. The artist has perhaps lived with difficulty during the long period he has bestowed upon his work; it has entailed expenses upon him; he may have incurred debts, not by choice, but necessity; his exertions have been praise-worthy, unceasing, and well directed; his health has suffered, but he has cheerfully submitted to his task, having faith in his constitution for the fulfilment of his task: he has hoped, reasonably hoped, that the results would remunerate, in a moderate way, his precarious labours, and in dispelling the slight fears he may feel on his own account, give happiness and content to those around him, far dearer than himself, and make them some little reward for the anxieties they have shown, and the care and attention they have bestowed upon him while the trial lasted. The season of exhibition comes, his work is sent, it could not in *decency* be refused, but it is hung in a situation in which both the painter and his friends are ashamed to see it. Talk of freeing the negro from his chains, or of converting the savage to the faith of the civilised world, of building prisons for vice, hospitals for disease, and almshouses for poverty; what claim has any of these while such flagrant wrong is done to a class of men whose lives and souls are devoted to the refinement, the humanisation, the best interests, the morals, and the most exalted enjoyments and pleasures of society? The evil has existed so long, and been passed over with that uncomplaining and patient suffering, for which painters, as a body, are not only peculiar, but culpable, that any honest warmth displayed by one who can feel, and who has for twenty-five years had no small number of occasions to exercise his patience, and to execrate his fate, will be regarded as extravagant, or to do *fuller justice*, as *painter-like*, by those to whom the subject is a matter of novelty. But there are men in the country, Christians, philanthropists, patriots, to whose notice it is hoped this peculiarly unhappy condition of art, and hardship of artists, will come,

and receive that attention to which it is so justly entitled. This is not a hope idly expressed, nor suggested by chance, nor shall it be speedily abandoned. It is in the *furor* of the feeling, sometimes perhaps in the resentment of wrongs, that the spirit of prophecy is engendered, and its fulfilment brought about. It is by that spirit pronounced, that this grand evil soon *SHALL* find a remedy! Let it be remembered by all who may feel interest in the matter, that both the rejection and the misplacement of works of art in our exhibitions is not necessarily the effect of want of merit in such works, but the want of space to hang them. This, with every reasonable thinker, will very much modify the case, and give it a totally distinct character from that in which works of art are so treated from their want of merit. As a proof, let the following facts be taken: At the last exhibition at the British Gallery, about 460 pictures were returned to the disappointed artists who sent them. Out of this number 100 were *marked* as acceptable, and would have been hung up but for one reason — want of space. At the present exhibition at the Royal Academy, about 900 pictures were returned, out of which a proportionate number were marked as accepted, but were obliged to be returned for want of space. With this take another fact — one even more formidable — that *half* the works now hung upon the walls are utterly lost, and, in their present position, are no better than so much upholdstery, and, for their authors, much worse!

Now, let any conscientious and feeling person reflect for a moment on the mass of injury, often irreparable, misery, disappointment, shame, and disgust, which must have sprung out of the two cases *only*, which are here mentioned; to say nothing of the increase of suffering produced by the repetition of such wrong. A man may bear for one, or two, or even ten years, *injustice* even, and if he has philosophy enough learn to rate it but as *disappointment*; but to bear this for half a life, and to feel that in the present state of things nothing better can happen to him, *except by chance*, is too much for human endurance or rational expectation.

If any reliance could be placed in the justice, sense, or decency of hanging committees — if a man were vain enough to suppose that any merits he might possess, on the score of his talents or his long services, would entitle him to that blundering attention which does wrong or right as it may happen, it would be but a bad condition still; for doing justice to him would be doing injury to others, when the claims of so many are to be considered. In a word, there is no remedy but one for the evil, and fortunately that is an easy and a complete one, demanding but little aid from the public, and but little exertion on the part of the painters — whom it most concerns. In a nation distinguished by its public spirit, its love of justice, and the readiness with which the rights and claims of all classes are brought under consideration, it is natural to hope that the peculiar grievances of a large body of artists will not pass unnoticed. There is abundant reason to hope that, if an appeal be made in a proper manner, it will not only be attended to, but that it will be successful.

If we consider the case of the one thousand four hundred painters in detail, we shall find enough to excite our sympathy, and perhaps the stir of a more useful and important feeling in us. These pictures were produced by artists, the number of whom taken together could not amount to less than six hundred. To each of these, the circumstance of their non-reception must have produced pain and disappointment, to many very serious consequences, and to some, perhaps, ruin. Let us suppose, that one hundred out of the six were portrait painters, to these would arise no *direct* pecuniary loss—that another hundred were artists whose pictures were sold already, and to whom the *sale* simply was not an object—that another hundred were those to whom the sale of their works was of consequence, but not of direct importance—that the fourth hundred were such as the greater number of artists are, men living and depending principally upon the season of exhibition for the disposal of their works, yet having still some slight and uncertain opportunity, by friends or casual visitors of the sale, now and then of a picture—another hundred are artists who either live on the outskirts of the Town, or are so circumstanced as to have no chance of casual sale, but who depend entirely on the season of exhibition for the means of existence. What shall we say of the other hundred, still worse off, more dependent, more hopeless, than the last? Failure to these is ruin. This melancholy catalogue embraces but a few of the most direct evils: there is still a long list of those which are only collateral.

There is a well-known animal, whose name it is common to invoke upon uncivil occasions, and whose patience is proverbial, but he will, when too hardly put upon, shake his ears, or give a kick with his foot, which it is well to stand clear of. The artist beats the animal hol low in his own particular *forte*; handle him as roughly as you please, burthen him as heavily as you like, he never winces or moves, except perhaps to stir his tongue. It is impossible to imagine how sensitive men bear so much suffering, and so long, without ever making an effort to free themselves.

At the time four hundred and sixty pictures were turned away from the doors of the British Gallery for the cause stated, there was within twenty yards of the spot an unoccupied Gallery, now filled with the clever works of the New Water-Colour Society. This Gallery might, *I suppose*, have been hired for two months for 50*l.*, which among the number of artists whose works could not be hung up when they were sent, would have averaged about 5*s.* each. This room would have held the whole, and would have afforded a curious test to the public of what class of works are, and are obliged to be, rejected. One or two artists were spoken to upon the subject, and their answers were to the effect, that they feared by so doing to offend the governors of the British Institution. Now there certainly is no accounting for men's opinions, or the mistaken notions under which they act; so that, for the same reason, it might be feared that the Royal Academy would be angered by any attempt to provide exhibition room for the hundreds of pictures which it is compelled annually

to return, or to hang up, to the still greater dismay of those who sent them. An answer, which will at once refute such a supposition, is to be found in a fact, at once illustrative of the state of things complained of, and honourable to the members of that Institution. It frequently happens, perhaps every season, that the deficiency of space on the walls of the Royal Academy create such embarrassment to the committee, that, in order to make room for pictures sent, the members agree, and each sends away one or more of his own pictures. This was the case this year, as was told me by the mouth of Mr. David Roberts himself; and to my certain knowledge it has been done upon a former occasion by Sir Augustus Calcott, Mr. Phillips, and, I dare say, many others, whose names *ought* to be known.

The inference to be drawn from considering this condition of things, affords the conviction that a larger and more commodious building ought to be provided, either by the nation, or by private enterprise, for the exhibition of pictures, to meet the increased demands of the artists. If it were possible to attach a new building to the back and unite it with the Royal Academy, perhaps it would be preferable to any other mode; if not, it ought to be built distinctly and expressly for the occasion. Whoever will take up the thing in a real liberal spirit will be sure to succeed; if they do not, it will be the fault of the artists themselves, to whose want of energy and perception their own trying and unfavourable condition is principally to be attributed.

We shall wait to see if this subject excites any attention; if not, means are at hand for giving it an increased interest.

#### A LETTER

WHICH CONTRADICTS CERTAIN STATEMENTS THAT HAVE APPEARED IN A MONTHLY PERIODICAL, RELATIVE TO THE TREATMENT WHICH THE LATE EDWARD BIRD, R. A. AND HIS FAMILY EXPERIENCED AT THE CITY OF BRISTOL.

A PURE love of truth and justice induces the Editor to give insertion to the following letter. It was resolved in the commencement of this work that no personalities of any kind should ever find a place in it, nor any disquisitions which have not art and its alliances, its elucidation and advantages, for its object. This case is a peculiar one, and may justify a departure from the line of conduct intended.

Bird, as is well known, made Bristol his residence for the greater part of his life, was patronised, and died there in embarrassed circumstances. These facts are the substance of what will be remembered by the reader, who has no more than a general interest in the life and fate of a man of genius, except some vague notion be left that he was neglected, and ill used by the people he peculiarly honoured by his talents. Now the circumstance of his dying poor favours the belief that Bird was either an extravagant ill-conducted man, or that the people with whom he resided gave him no opportunity of providing for himself and his family; and thus, by a false impression, dishonour falls upon himself, or upon those with whom it was his fate to associate. The Editor has a few words to say upon the first of these suppositions: his correspondent will speak as to the last.

The world, as far as it condescends to take connoissance of such matters, has a strong susceptibility for the belief that men of genius must of necessity

be men of irregular lives, loose habits, reckless and indifferent, and that thus they render themselves poor, and their families necessitous. George Morland drank like a brute or a genius, and never painted a picture but to pay his reckoning; and so did somebody else, and so must, and so has many a silly fellow, for the sake of being considered a genius. If there ever was one man in the world more free from such vices and such vanity, it was Edward Bird. Few men's lives are marked with so many traits of virtue, such striking worth, such perfect honour and integrity, such a deep sense and strict adherence to all the obligations due from the man, the father, the husband, the friend and fellow-creature; no man could be more strictly just, honest, industrious, and even prudent, making that nice and delicate abatement which constitutes the virtue of generosity. How then could such a man become poor, it will be asked. It may be answered, by a *conspiracy of circumstances*, over which it appears impossible to have exercised any available control. After, for many years, devoting himself to the creation of those beautiful graphic comedies whose excellence is unique, and but very slenderly understood, Bird was tempted to leave this for another walk of art, an unfortunate one, the flattery of great men and great events. The embarkation and debarkation of Louis XVIII. for France, tempted him to a trial of his skill, his patience, and his independence. Month after month he danced attendance upon the great, to catch sittings for portraits for his pictures; thus sacrificing time, money and feeling, with a sense of his own dignity always standing in the way of his success. The guinea with which he would liberally have rewarded the porter in the hall, might easily have been made the passport to the object he sought *if* he *could* have condescended to have entered by the back door, and gone up the back stairs; but *independence* insisted on the front, and the treatment of a gentleman. While this conflict was going on, health and patience gave way, and *means*, which had hitherto been sufficient for his own wants and the necessities of many a one beside, became too small, and in the end utterly deficient. To a just, an honest, and hitherto a thriving man, such a state was severely felt; disappointment led the way, sickness followed in the train of evils, and soon death put an end to the career of a man whose fortunes had hitherto been prosperous, whose talents were held in high respect, and whose name had ever been mentioned with honour and respect. This is written by the hand of one who knew him intimately, and who loved him sincerely.

The gentleman who will reply to the latter supposition is perfectly well known to the editor, has had the fullest opportunities of becoming acquainted with the facts upon which he writes, and is entirely incapable of wilfully misrepresenting them. If the particular charge relative to the treatment of Bird be true, it is difficult to conceive how this can affect the character of Bristol, since it is quite certain that a few individuals who would act precisely in the way described might be found any where. It is by a species of poetical rather than real justice that a whole community are charged with the misdoing, ignorance, or bad taste of the mass; and upon this principle the maledictions of Savage and the denouncements of Chatterton fall harmless. Both the editor and his correspondent have arraigned freely the conduct of certain men and certain measures, but it has been far less as a local than a general accusation. In matters connected with taste, Bristol is as the world, and the world as Bristol; and, by taking instances from other quarters, although they cannot be defended, it would be easy enough to prove that full as much intelligence, liberality, and good taste, is to be found in that city as in any other town or city in England.

Sir,—Allow me, through your magazine, (and may it meet with every success it deserves,) to correct some misrepresentations with respect to



Edward Bird, R. A., which have appeared in *The Art Union*. Surely those are no friends to arts or artists, who arrogantly set themselves up, not only as arbiters of taste, but of the conduct of the patrons and friends of the profession. The mischief of it is, that a disgust is created which has a tendency to displace the love of art itself. The world will not be forced into patronage or admiration. We must take it as we find it—cultivate the taste by works both of the pen and pencil; but we can never do much good by treating with severity and contempt those whom we should wish to be patrons.

One single instance of unjust abuse, one unmerited charge of neglect of genius, or of lack of sympathy with its sufferings, publicly circulated, retards the progress and estimation of art, that ten men of genius in an age can scarcely recover the position which this ill-judged spirit has lost for it.

Nothing can be more false than the charges brought against the friends and patrons of Bird in Bristol. There he was greatly loved and patronised. Most of his pictures were painted for Bristol merchants: nor do I ever remember, and I knew him during the whole course of his painter's life, his having a picture left unsold upon his hands. How few artists can boast of so much success! He had, in fact, more orders than he could execute.

The story of the three gentlemen making a profit by his "Chevy Chase,"—selling it to the Marquis of Stafford for three hundred guineas, and paying Bird but two hundred,—is not true. The commission was given by these three friends to Bird, solely with the view of serving him, and encouraging him to paint an historical picture, as yet he had not painted one, and they wished him to compete for the prize at the British Institution. They had not *seen* the picture commenced, as is stated, nor was any subject fixed upon. But the most important part of the denial is, that they did not make a profit. There was indeed a contest of good feeling between Bird and them, and which ended by a compromise honourable to both parties,—Bird had all the money, and painted for them some small acknowledgments. This I have from one of the parties, who so acted, and doubts not but that the other two did as he did.

Equally unfounded is the charge, that three hundred gentlemen put the widow to the expense of a public funeral, for which they had engaged to pay. There was a procession to honour the artist, but all followed the hearse on foot, without hat-bands, scarfs, or anything of the kind; without being entertained, either before or after, at the widow's or any others cost. The procession did not add a sixpence to the expence of a funeral. If it be said why did not the gentlemen pay the cost of the funeral whatever it was? the answer is complete. They knew not that Mr. Bird died in circumstances to render such an offer other than an insult. Very few knew the difficulties of the artist; and when it was known that his family were left in distress, great exertions were made to raise a fund for their maintenance. There was an exhibition for the purpose, and a considerable sum was raised and put in trust for them, and they now enjoy it.

It is said, too, that the widow sold her furniture to pay the funeral expenses and debts. If this were true, I see nothing in it to the disgrace of Bird's friends, because, by so doing, it would have made other material funds the larger; and the furniture actually was the property of the creditors. But is it true?

I know that much trouble was taken by the friends of the family to compound with the creditors, and I know that by the particularly active exertions of one friend the creditors were settled with, and *the funeral expenses, too, paid* from a sum which he had obtained by his negotiating with the Earl of Bridgewater for the sale of "Embarkation," and the donation from Prince Leopold of 100*l.*;—the creditors had eight shillings in the pound.

So that by this arrangement it appears that the widow had the furniture, which she may have disposed of afterwards, but certainly not to pay the creditors, who were paid by the sum raised as I have stated, an account of which has been fully given by that gentleman with his signature in the local press of Bristol. And if it be said that at least the 100*l.* given by Prince Leopold belonged to Mrs. Bird, I admit it; and further state that she received it; and that according to the accounts made up by that active friend, (they are now before me), it appears that Mrs. Bird or her family received in cash not only that 100*l.*, but more than 200*l.* So that not only was a sale of furniture unnecessary, but a considerable sum, after paying creditors and funeral expenses, was paid to Mrs. Bird. And this is independent of the property raised and settled in trust, as I have before stated.

So that it appears that the statements in the Art Union are without truth; that a very little enquiry in Bristol would have shown them to be untrue; and that Bristol, which is charged with worse than neglect of Bird, was in reality his kindest patron and benefactor, and the benefactor of his family, who continue to this day in the enjoyment of funds raised for them in abused Bristol.

I am, Sir,

ONE OF THE ARTIST'S OLDEST FRIENDS.

#### THE VAN EYCK MEDIUM FOR PAINTING.

OIL Painting is said to have been invented in 1410, and John Van Eyck is said to have been its author. All the authorities who lived at the time and upon the spot, both historians and annalists, are entirely silent upon the fact. The tombstone of Van Eyck sets forth his virtues, and his talents are there said to eclipse those of Phidias or Apelles; yet not a word is mentioned of his having made the important discovery of oil painting. Vasari, who lived and wrote 150 years after the event, gives Van Eyck the credit of the invention, and tells how it took place. Van Menden followed, and repeated just what Vasari has said, without adding any new fact or circumstance; and upon these authorities rest the claims of Van Eyck!

A lady of the name of Saunders, having devoted some attention to the inquiry, and made some experiments, was anxious to obtain the opinion of some artists, to whom she wished to communicate the result. A meeting, therefore, took place, at which Mrs. Saunders produced the medium, which was submitted to some tests, together with certain accounts, which appear to favour the notion that it was this identical vehicle which was used by Van Eyck, and which probably continued to be used, for an indefinite time afterwards. The gentlemen, to whose inspection it was submitted, were so favourably impressed, that they resolved to give it a fair trial of some months, and then to make the result of such trial known, in some way yet to be determined upon. It is but justice to Mrs. Saunders to say, that the passage in Vasari is exceedingly obscure and unmeaning, unless read in the same sense and with the understanding which her supposition gives to it. Much credit is due to this lady for her exertions, and it is to be hoped, if the secret be really of value, that a more substantial remuneration will attend her.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

To the *few* who have offered me congratulation and help, I return my warmest thanks, and assure them that their approbation, particularly that of my brothers in art, is both an encouragement and a reward. Those who have condescended to regard my advocacy of the cause of art with favour, I thank in *her honoured name*, and venture to express a hope that ere long "we" shall be found still more worthy of their approbation.

Among my subscribers, *the first name received*, and always the first in liberality and taste, I am proud to place that of her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge, and to add that noble and intelligent patron of modern art, the Lord Francis Egerton. Nor am I less proud to accompany these marks of honour with those which attach to the following names:—Sir Martin Archer Shee, President of the Royal Academy, Thomas Phillips, late Professor of Painting at the R. A., E. H. Bailly, R.A., William Etty, R.A., C. R. Leslie, R.A., C. L. Eastlake, A. Cooper, R.A., C. Stanfield, R.A., A. E. Chalon, R.A., James Chalon, R.A., Richard Cooke, R.A., George Jones, R.A., Frederick Lee, R.A., George Patten, A.R.A., Charles Landseer, A.R.A., J. R. Herbert, A.R.A., &c. &c.

The clever verses, with the clumsy title of “Facts of vital Importance, &c.,” are only faulty in their drift being obscure, and their conclusions vague!

“An Ode to Hanging Committees” is good, but it must not be forgotten that the editor’s arm has not been hardened by long use. Flagellation may in some cases be necessary, but a cat-o’-nine tails, although very efficient, is not the prettiest instrument in the world to begin with.

Among the communications coming from an unprofessional source, there is one written in so kindly a spirit towards art, and so warm-hearted, that I must give it insertion for art’s sake, although I am compelled to mutilate for my own; and it is still far too complimentary:—

“MR. EDITOR,

Upton Hall, near Newark, May 3. 1843.

“Sir—Having, at public meetings of our clergy, not unfrequently been told that the ministers of the church are at all times *most thankful* when country gentlemen will, by attending, give them their countenance and support; it has, in a somewhat like manner, struck me that, even among you, gentlemen, the *professors* of art, the unassuming presence of an unpretending *amateur* may, by possibility, be attended, in at least some trifling degree, with that countenance and help which a sincere friend of art is ever ready to bestow, and which is now offered, in the hope of aiding you, as well as countenancing you, in the very praiseworthy undertaking you have with so much patriotic good feeling—with such a manifest share of superior ability—and I will add (the lamentably perverted opportunities for improvement, and the very baneful *bad taste*, considered) *so courageously* commenced.

“Influenced by this heart-stirring notice, I offer you my congratulations. The very novel, as well as attractive manner in which you have so auspiciously entered upon your admirable work; together with the judicious and singularly interesting method adopted by you in the conducting of it, cannot fail, I feel perfectly convinced, of making it, not only the most entertaining, but the most instructive of our periodicals. Considered in every way, your work cannot fail of being productive of very substantial improvement, whether in a moral, a religious, or a humanising point of view, to the community at large, so woefully deficient in those sublime and truly elevating sentiments which it is the province of *high art* to inspire. For it is a fact, Mr. Editor, most undoubtedly clear, that—to give once again the so often quoted, but not on that account less worthy to be instilled maxim—

‘*Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes  
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.*’

“I remain, Sir,

“Your very sincere well-wisher,

“And obliged humble servant,

“T. WRIGHT.”

THE

# ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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## ADDRESS.

COURTEOUS READER,

I AGAIN take the liberty to address you directly upon an occasion which I hope you will regard with some degree of satisfaction. I have the pleasure to offer you this month an addition to the Magazine of half a sheet, or eight pages, without increasing the price, or intending to lay you under any farther contribution, even for your thanks, since I have all along considered this your due. The Artist and Amateur's Magazine will now be upon a *par* with other publications as to price and the quantity of matter it contains. As for taking its place among the *cheap* literature of the day, that was never intended or thought possible, for several reasons; first, because the subject is one of but partial interest to the few, and of none to the multitude. On this account it must be considered in the same light as such subjects as Divinity, Law, Medicine, and some others. Secondly, it was always intended that its pages should be filled with original matter instead of a compilation of what is hackneyed and old; and again, on thinking of *cheap things* in general, it was recollected that they often turn out very dear, so that a conscientious dealer will not recommend them to his customers.

The trial of three months which has been given to this publication has brought to light some facts which nothing but time and experience can, and which will be taken advantage of in future. The approbation of artists and persons conversant with art has been pretty general; but it has been found that the very persons to whose service the work is principally devoted, have not expressed that satisfaction of its utility which was hoped and expected. It appears that it has not completely filled the place it was intended to take among the publications of the day, and stood forward in the character it was meant peculiarly to assume, namely, that of a public and general instructor. It has been remarked that its tone is too artistical, and for that reason above the comprehension of the general reader. This is certainly an important and a very delicate point to decide upon. If true, it shows that the projector has missed his aim; if not true, it is calculated to lead to a mode of treating subjects, in order to mend the evil, in a manner so little complimentary to the understandings of the reader as to give

offence. Perhaps what is meant is, that no instruction of a purely elemental and practical character has yet been afforded, and not that matter of an instructive kind has not been offered in a manner free from technical difficulties and quite within the comprehension of intelligent persons. However, the Editor will take care that each month shall bring with it some little matter addressed directly to those who are beginning the study and pursuing the practice of art, as well as those who are anxious to possess themselves of the first principles, and to cultivate a good taste. These will be given under the title of "The Tutor." It is the character of a guide in art, and consequently an instrument in the cultivation of taste, humble as the reader pleases, that this work founds its pretensions and its claims to public favour. Its grand object is to disseminate and to throw into public channels *that knowledge which artists necessarily acquire in the pursuit of their profession*, believing that to be the thing necessary. In this way it is intended to afford a second education, which may in some degree atone and make up for the deficiencies of the first. It was never intended that the work should be made a mere *newspaper* of art, or take up subjects which have but a *passing interest*. It is very well understood that to make reading useful, it must be made amusing as well; but in this particular it is desired that the matter given should be of a kind to which the reader can return a second time at least. Some slight dissatisfaction has been expressed that the Editor does not attempt a review of the works of living artists, but he has many reasons to congratulate himself on the prudence and delicacy of his determination to abstain from taking such a step. The pages of the Magazine however are open to any one who likes to undertake the task, provided the writer is an artist, and accompanies his remarks with his name. Every article *without* a signature the Editor claims as his own, every other must bear that of the writer. With proper acknowledgments for all favours,

I am, Courteous Reader,  
Your faithful Servant,  
THE EDITOR.

July, 1843.

P. S. In the next Number the Editor commences his "Four Years residence in Italy."

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## THE CARTOONS.

It is a great satisfaction to state, that the cartoons, for which premiums were offered by her Majesty's commission, have greatly exceeded, both in merit and in number, what was expected; and thus the scheme of competition, upon the results of which many doubts were entertained, has been proved competent to its object, and appears, as it has been stated, to be the best method which could have been adopted.

In a country in which the merits of art are so slenderly understood from the defective mode of education which prevails, or from a false notion that a knowledge of art requires no study, and that taste is intuitive, it was highly judicious and wise to adopt some method by which the distribution of the patronage offered by the government should not be thrown entirely into the old and accustomed channels, and most certainly it would have been, had the direction of it been put under that influence which yields so readily to the allurements of name and station. The men for whom fortune has so considerably provided places in an exhibition gallery, would, if following out the old system, have been the only persons having works to show: all others would have been debarred from such a privilege, for the double reason, that they would not have been employed to produce any, or permitted to show them, if they had. Although not fully convenient, Westminster-hall will be marked as the first spot in England in which any thing like fair play was afforded to British artists, both as regards their talents and a display of their works, and will, no doubt, be remembered by many an artist with grateful recollection, if for no other, on that particular account.

Every praise is due to the committee of management, who are acting upon the most liberal principles. It has been determined not to reject the works of *any* aspirant. The public will, therefore, be let into the secret of what description of production it is necessary to reject at exhibitions generally; and if they feel that certain works exhibited here ought, in compassion for their authors, to have been returned to them, they will be tolerated for the sake of the principle and the feeling which consent to their admission. Out of so large a number as that sent, it follows, as a matter of course, that a large proportion are of an inferior quality; but it is asserted, not without some professional pride, that the public will find a display of talent highly calculated to procure for British art and artists an honourable distinction, not only in this country, but in the world of art generally. The CAPABILITIES of British artists is a subject upon which many comments have been made already in this work; and while their knowledge of the principles of art has been asserted to be far above that of any other nation, it is believed that their powers, if properly excited, and called into action, will be proved by this short and imperfect trial to be fully equal to any with which they can be compared.

The number of cartoons sent amounts to 142. No time is fixed, but it is probable that the private view will take place on the first of July, and that the exhibition will be thrown open to the public immediately after. It appears to be in contemplation to tax the public the usual fee of a shilling for admission for a certain period, and afterwards to open the Hall to the public gratuitously. It must be remarked, that this does not appear the most praiseworthy course, as the public ought not to be called upon to pay for seeing the pictures they are already taxed to create. However, the whole project

has been begun and continued with so much liberal spirit and intelligence, that we may regard this measure as tending to some good end.

Three advertisements have been put forth by the commissioners, calling upon artists in different departments to send in specimens by a fixed period, which are to be submitted to a decision by competition. These are, first, designs for sculpture to be cast in bronze, or worked in marble. Secondly, designs for stained glass; and, thirdly, specimens and patterns of ornamental carved work in wood. The offer made by the commissioners, is "confined to British artists, including foreigners who may have resided ten years in the United Kingdom."

### EXHIBITION ROOM FOR THE WORKS OF BRITISH ARTISTS.

THE considerations which this subject involves are the most important which at the present hour belongs to the condition of art. It is quite impossible for the public, or even the particular friends of artists, to form a notion of the evils, the suffering, the ruin, which attends on the pursuit of the painter from the sheer want of a proper place in which to exhibit his works. Among the evils are those of ill feelings created towards those who are engaged in the painful office of rejecting, disposing, and hanging the pictures which are sent for exhibition to the public galleries. This creates an expression of discontent, and leads to the spread of a notion of the jealousies and jarring of artists, where circumstances alone are in fault. Since the establishment of the British Gallery, twenty-five years ago, artists are increased in number in the proportion of three to one, so that the space upon the walls of that institution, which was then barely enough, is now infinitely too narrow. The rooms of the Society in Suffolk Street are but just large enough for its members. The Royal Academy, as a gallery for the exhibition of pictures and sculpture, is, as a national institution, utterly disgraceful, and will remain a lasting monument of an infamous job, and of the folly and stupidity of its constructor. It is a lamentable misfortune to the nation to have thrown away its money with the finest opportunity that ever was offered for the erection of an edifice honourable to the period, worthy of the occasion, and appropriate to art; nor is it less a misfortune to the body to whom it is devoted, and to the artists at large, that such a wretched hole should have been assigned them as the theatre of their operations and the *locale* of their annual exhibition.

Well might William the Fourth observe to the worthy President, on presenting him with the key, "Sir Martin, I wished to offer you the key of a Royal Academy; I am sorry I can only present you with that of a dog-kennel."

The *misunderstanding* created amongst artists by the wrongs and inconveniences done them in the disposal of their pictures when sent for exhibition, is fully evidenced in the opinion which prevails, that making any attempt to create a new Institution, in which the works of art should be fairly displayed, would offend the noble Governors of the British Institution or the body of the Royal Academy. Thus viewed, the question assumes a character of rivalry, and looks like a matter of *choice* instead of *necessity*. It is much as if both Institutions said to the applicant for places, "We return your pictures, gentlemen, or hang them in out-of-the-way places on our

walls, *because* they are unworthy of any better treatment ;” whereas the real reply *would be*, “ We regret that we have neither space nor opportunity of treating you in a way more worthy of your merits.” Looking at the question in this way it assumes a very different character, and the circumstances of the case lead naturally to feelings between the parties very different from those of opposition, anger, and a sense of injury voluntarily inflicted, and appears as it is, in its true light, a misfortune to all parties. More bad blood has been stirred up between artists on the subject of the disposal of their pictures than from all the other causes of dissension put together. On this account alone, if for no other, it is highly desirable that some new arrangements and accommodations should be afforded as speedily as possible.

As for the suffering the loss, and often the absolute ruin attendant upon the present state of things, these considerations constitute a subject, which, if fully known, would make larger demands upon public sympathy and relief than any which has been offered to its notice. As has been said, patience and endurance is the characteristic virtue of the painter : absorbed and enchained by the magic of his studies, he becomes culpably insensible to his own situation, and only half awake to the condition of those who are dearer to him than himself. The loud yell of the negro under the lash of the whip is heard from one end of the world to the other ; but the noble Indian at the stake dies in manly silence, and thinks it more honourable to submit to his fate than to murmur at it, let his tortures be ever so severe and cruel. There are men in the profession who *would have* done it honour, who started with their young hearts full of the enthusiastic love of art, with energies equal to its toils, with talents proportionate, with minds diligently cultivated, and with feelings enriched with the true gift of nature, and warmed and tempered by the genuine fire of genius. Many such have sunk into, or survive in utter insignificance, the doomed and wretched victims of untoward circumstances. Every candidate for public favour knows too well the precarious situation in which he stands. He knows that by neglecting occasion to present himself to the public eye, he stands in danger of being, first overlooked, and then forgotten, even though his talents not only remain in full force, but are doubly increased. He knows that he must strike continually upon public attention to preserve his reputation and himself. What shall we say of the condition of men who are so circumstanced, as to be *liable* at any time to have the evil here spoken of *thrust upon them let them do whatever they will to avoid it*. This is exactly the condition of the painter after he has worked for years, and has acquired some portion of well-earned reputation, and is flattered with the hope of success, it is very possible in his case that his hopes shall be crushed at once, and that all he has laboured for and earned shall be thrown prostrate and destroyed. If for one season, for instance, his work gets placed in a public exhibition *where it cannot be seen* (to say nothing of its not being received for want of space), an injury is done to him which he may labour for years without being able to recover ; and if for two seasons or more his pictures *chance* to get bad situations, he is probably ruined. So important and so true are these facts, that an artist to whom this species of misfortune happens is sometimes asked, even by his friends, “ how is it that you never exhibit now ?” or, “ how is it that you have no picture this year ?” at the same time that he has not missed a season, and has at that moment a twelve month’s labour buried in the condemned cell,—fit emblem of the soul of the architect — lifted into the clouds of the “ gorgeous palace,” or smothered in the dust from the feet of its visitors.



As it is one of the inherent conditions of society, that merits shall not penetrate beyond a certain depth, or, like fuel thrown upon a fire, last only a certain time and require renewal at the end of it, it is of little use to complain; but it is highly necessary and wise to guard against such an evil, and it is hard indeed to put impediments in the way of men who are fully sensible of their danger, and desirous of adopting all prudential measures to avoid it. Artists, in a general way, are regarded by a *considerate* world as men little disposed to worldly caution and the prudent considerations of life; it is little suspected that there is *one important point* at all events, in which it is impossible to exercise it. For, as has been shown, and is abundantly proved by being submitted to the test, after a painter has exhausted himself and his means to boot, he is compelled to submit his fortunes, and his just pretensions to reward, to the uncertain decision of *mere chance*. That a work of superior merit will stand the *better* chance is *partially* true; but where works of this character multiply to a certain extent, justice cannot be done to all, and of course some must suffer, and thus the facts assumed are borne out and confirmed.

The evils, the suffering, and the loss attending the present condition of the artist are clearly defined, and call loudly for the application of a remedy. It must be seen that what is complained of is a hardship of a peculiar character, that it has gradually arisen out of circumstances over which neither foresight, nor any other species of worldly prudence, could exercise any control whatever. It is an evil which has existed as long as it can be borne, that it is not in the wane but in the increase, and that it has been submitted to with that patient resignation and fortitude which entitles it to sympathy, consideration, and respect.

The remedy is certainly an easy one, and it is astonishing that no builder takes up the project of providing convenient exhibition rooms as a mere speculation, as there is such ample promise that it would completely answer his purpose. It would be premature to enter into the details of a plan for doing away the evils, injuries, and inconveniences complained of, and as a private opinion it may be worth nothing; but should the project proposed ever rear itself into existence, it appears to the writer that it ought *not* to be separated from the interests and control of the Royal Academy. What is said about houses being divided against themselves is worthy of the consideration of artists as well as other men.

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### BRITISH INSTITUTION.

AN exhibition of pictures is now open to the public at the above Institution, which contains works of some of the old masters, several specimens of artists deceased, and two samples of modern German art, which, as the catalogue tells us, were introduced in compliance with a wish "expressed to see some specimens" of that school.

To proceed as they do in the processions on the Continent, we will allow these things to stalk at the head of our remarks, leaving visitors to bestow what attention they please upon them, and the more worthy to follow them. It is a pity, perhaps, they were introduced at all, or that a better reason was not assigned for it. However it may still do good, and if some are beguiled into an admiration of such productions, it is to be hoped that a much larger number will look

upon them with the indifference or the feeling they deserve. To say that these productions are without merit would be flagrantly unjust; but their merits render the condition of their authors the more pitiable, since they give proof of talent misapplied and degraded. Some admirer may remark that nothing more was intended than the imitation of a picture of an early and barbarous period of art. In that case the painter has done a very silly thing to waste so much of a life, always too short for the demands of art, upon so unworthy an object. And worse than all, he has not succeeded!! A gilded background surrounding a set of quaint shapes, tinted after the pattern of the Berlin wool samplers now so fashionable, no more conveys a notion of the earnestness of purpose, the pure feeling, the strong conception, the insight and oversight which characterises the early works, together with the evidence of the richest endowments of nature combined with the happiest ignorance of art, than a child's gilt gingerbread watch represents the material and workmanship of the real and veritable thing itself. Or, to use a simile rather more dignified and more to the immediate purpose, than a naked maniac escaped from his keeper conveys an idea of the first man in all his simplicity, freedom, and happiness.

Looking at such productions as these as *works of art*, the feelings revolt at the insolent attempt to arrest your attention, and to drag you with violent hands from all you have been in the habit of regarding in that light. If indeed you are held by the button while you are asked to look, and told that what you see is the result of a *freak* in which the painter has indulged, you good-naturedly suffer yourself to be detained, and if you deign to reply, you recommend him not to indulge in too many such, lest the next step should be—a strait-jacket! Thus dismissed, the painter and the picture are speedily forgotten, and cared as little about as they deserve; but when you hear people attempting to build up a reputation, to found a school, and to claim honour for a country and a people upon such a plea, you stop suddenly and begin to ask yourself what it is you have been doing and thinking of all your life long, and what all the world has been at in setting up a certain idea of excellence—an idol of perfection and taste, with such blockheads as Michael Angelo, Raphael, Da Vinci, and a dozen other such fellows as the high priests of her temple, with the whole of mankind for votaries and worshippers, *with one little modest exception!*

Titian is supposed to have been something of a colourist,—Raphael, it is said, knew something of the forms, character, expressions of the human creature, and the various modes of nature's appearances. This is a pretty general opinion in which the most highly talented and the most deeply learned agree. No men are more laboriously knowing and more verbose on the peculiar and minute excellences of such artists as these than the admirers of this gingerbread style; and, being aware of this, one is disposed to ask how it happens that these excellences are never *imitated* or aimed at, in the remotest degree. It is

very natural to suppose that where men are strongly impressed with the beauty and perfection of certain productions, that they should strive to learn the means, to catch the spirit, to imitate, to rival, and if possible to surpass them; but when you see them taking a directly opposite course, what is the natural inference? why, that their admiration is mere affectation, and their refusal to be guided gross ignorance, culpable vanity, hapless insanity, or hopeless imbecility. No one acquainted with art can look at the picture of "Christ blessing the Children," without admitting that the artist has a talent for art, and a feeling appropriate to the subject he has treated. There is a subdued tone of feeling, a simplicity of action, and a grace of expression—a hush, as it were, of awe, respect, and affection, which suits the sentiment of the story exactly. But as soon as you begin to feel this, and the desire to indulge in it, you are suddenly roused from your reverie by the glare and glitter of a gilded board! In vain will you attempt to quiet yourself by trying to associate this with something you have seen and can remember among the venerable remains of antiquity. What the painter has laboured to do in one way, he has outdone in another, and thus you find he has been engaged in working out a graphic solecism as little to his own credit as to the satisfaction of those to whom he has addressed himself.

In a private and individual sense all such productions as these, done by men whom honest Richardson called the "*cunning fools* of art," are perfectly harmless. Poonah work, oriental tinting, pictures done in sand or wool. Drawings, made on a board with the end of a hot poker, or the point of a sharp needle, and filled up with coloured wax and so on, are all amusing trifles, and may prevent those engaged in them from doing something worse; but in an artistical and a popular sense, they deserve the severest reprobation, as tending to draw off attention from what is good and estimable, to the objects of a vile and a pernicious taste. The Monk's Head is of the same school, and not worth a remark; but a word in favour of the painter may be said. It is a question whether it is *quite fair* to exhibit a picture accidentally picked up upon the Continent, and which perhaps, in the mind of the artist himself, is a work of no consideration, as a sample of the talent of a man who *may* be capable of doing things infinitely superior in character.

#### THE WORKS OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

It will be regarded by many as a species of graphic heresy to cast the shadow of an impeachment, or to entertain for a moment the slightest misgiving upon the merits of such a man as Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose reputation, if not *wide-spread*, is at least loud-sounding in his own country.

That Sir Joshua thought well and entered deeply into the philosophy of his art there can be no doubt, but that he was more than a *great artist for his time* will admit of many. That his *forte* was portraiture has been pretty generally admitted, but even *here* his talents will

neither bear too close a scrutiny nor too rigid a comparison. Surround Reynolds by the circumstances in which he lived — the ignorance of art, the vicious taste of the public generally, and the scarcely more exalted feeling of the great mass of his brothers in art, and among such pigmies Sir Joshua steps forth a giant. But associate him with such men as Rembrandt, Rubens, and Vandyke, to say nothing of such spirits as Raphael, Titian, and a dozen others, and his warmest admirers will feel desirous to remove him for his own sake from such companionship.

As one anxious for the truth, and still bearing in memory recent impressions caught from the Vatican, and the rich stores of excellence in the veritable home of art, I cannot hide from myself, and, if I am right, I wish others to go with me, that the works of Reynolds in *merit* are very far indeed below their *reputation*. To one who combines patriotism with a love of truth, and an affection for art, this feeling is painful, and the conviction which attends it unpalatable. It is, however, important, highly important, particularly for the artist whose business it is to seek the just and the perfect, and to separate the right from the wrong in art, both for his own use and that of others, that a true estimate should be formed.

That false notions of the real value and excellence of the talents of Reynolds or any other painter should exist is in no way surprising, considering all circumstances, nor is it of any great importance as a matter of criticism as long as painters can distinguish what is just in itself, and capable of being made a guide in the theory and practice of their art. It behoves every painter, however, to look with his own eyes, to use his own thoughts, and, although perhaps a little *perilous*, to speak out his own convictions. I should like therefore the thinking, the impartial, and the candid portion of my brethren, to look at the present collection of the works of a man of whom we have so many reasons to be proud, and to determine in their own minds, or to tell the public, through me if they please, their thoughts and opinions of his merits. It is some years since so many works of this great master were collected and offered to public inspection in juxtaposition with others: and perhaps it has been the fate of many, as it has been mine, to have had in the mean time an opportunity of seeing and examining many works of the highest authority that exist since earlier opinions were formed, and thus to be enabled to make a better comparison, and to arrive at more important conclusions.

Whatever may be the real merits of Reynolds, and there is no disposition to deny, but a desire rather to magnify them, it is to be remarked and *feared* that his works generally betray a lamentable want of that intelligence and character which distinguish the productions of the great masters in art. His men want dignity, his women refinement, grace, and beauty, and above all other qualities, sense; and his children, *even* the great charm which belongs to infantile character. Whenever an attempt is made to elevate his subject, it is a dead failure; and in the direct and literal rendering of character, so

peculiarly the province of the portrait painter, there is a great deficiency of individuality, and the *force* and value of natural appearances and peculiarities.\* We are ready to make allowances for the stiff and quaint dresses in which Reynolds was compelled to put some of his personages. But if we will turn to the recollection of the portraits of the *sovereigns* and heroes painted by Lawrence, and make a comparison, it will be sadly at the expense of Reynolds. The costume worn by the women is not graceful; but the charms, the beauties, the various graces and airs of the sex, were ever the same, and must have afforded to the painter an endless study, of which Reynolds has but slenderly availed himself, in spite of the most favourable opportunities afforded him. Judging from his pictures, Reynolds appears to have been almost devoid of a love for the sex — even in the sentiment.

If we take his picture of Garrick between Comedy and Tragedy, and refer to the condition of art and the state of public taste at the period it was painted, we cannot help feeling that such a work was calculated to make a strong impression, and to obtain the praise that has been bestowed upon it; but if we examine its merits we shall find that it deserved them but in a very slight degree. As a picture, it is far less *artistical* than many others. The head of Garrick exhibits nothing but mere vacant fun, while the muse of frolic is feeble in the extreme, and even less pregnant with the sentiment than the mortal himself. As for Tragedy, she is utterly devoid of dignity and character. The commonest heroine of melodramatic caste at Astley's, putting on her stage face, and submitting to the brush of an ordinary limner, would make a representative of the genius of Tragedy far more striking and appropriate.

The "Ugolino" is entirely deficient in that exalted feeling and pure sentiment requisite. A painter at once sees into the secret of its composition. An old man's head† was found which, most probably, suggested the subject itself. It was painted with the experience of a hand long accustomed to its task, in a light which displayed well its character: some juvenile heads were then added, the prison bars, a few rays, and hence the story and subject of the unhappy County Ugolino.

The head of the old man displays neither resignation nor despair, nor the insensibility which follows. It is illuminated in a manner totally at variance both with the truth and with the sentiment, since neither accord with the gloom of the dungeon; but it is a nice bit of painting, rendered faithfully as it appeared in the painting-room of

\* There is one exception here — it is the portrait of Madame Schindelin, which is full of intelligence and meaning. It is exceedingly interesting and curious to observe the manner in which it is executed, being devoid of *style*, and differing entirely from the ordinary mode of the artist. The introduction of this picture amongst its companions says most intelligibly, Loose and vague generalities may be made vehicles of colour and effect, but in this way alone can expressive character, and that peculiar charm which belongs to individuality, be rendered by the painter, *ex. gr.*

† It is now exhibited by the side of the pictures under examination.

the artist, and that was enough both for the painter's purpose and that of the friends who surrounded and praised him, and who provided successors to do the same. The children, after the principal figure was executed, were considered, as they are, but as so much make-weight to the story. They were therefore painted in a less careful manner, as the commonest observation will prove, and left to take their chance. They are utterly deficient in character and expression, and neither in colour nor in the mode of illumination do they convey any evidence of their condition, nor the sentiment which belongs to it. No one will deny that the picture contains a great deal of merit, but it is mere picture-making merit; the hand and the eye of the painter furnishing forth that which ought to have come from the mind and feelings.

It is very easy to see that the conceptions of Reynolds, and the feeling he was capable of carrying into his productions, were constantly interfered with by the means he employed—by his style of execution. That affected breadth led continually to the sweeping away of those nice and delicate distinctions which often constitute the highest excellence, the real character, the true expression, the beauty, and the individuality of objects. That course-mannered execution often gives vulgarity, and always a look of sameness, to whatever is touched by it. Faces assume the same look, hands the same shape, and every thing wants the variety of nature. It is painful to see for ever a patch of the same intensity under the eyes, noses, and ears of men, women, and children. Side-curls and pig-tails belonged to the period, but they are less offensive accompaniments and blots upon humanity than the eternal blotches bestowed by the mannerism of the painter.

We see clearly enough the influence of Reynolds's manner in the number of imitators it created both at the time and since. Execution has certainly its charms, and an apparent facility is perhaps indispensable to a masterly performance; but the execution which obtrudes itself, which taints every thing, and which reminds you at every turn of the painter instead of the subject, is an abomination to which the timid bungling of the Chinese is graceful and perfect art.

Painters can never be sufficiently upon their guard against the allurements of style, nor can they ever be watchful enough in seeing that they are not imposed upon by the *prestige* of a reputation, particularly if such a one was formed at a period when art was less understood than at the present time, and which has thence been handed down by those who have neither the inclination, the means, nor the necessity of improvement; and who can only be corrected and led on as the painter himself advances, and can take them with him.

Except as a guide in taste, it is of no consequence to the painter whether the pictures of Reynolds are estimated above or below their real value: his business lies with the qualities of the pictures as examples of art, and as guides in practice; and it is upon these considerations solely that these remarks are made.

To an uninformed person it will be difficult, but to an artist who

has studied his art it is easy, to perceive and explain upon what the fallacies of Reynolds hinged. His mind was highly qualified and highly cultivated for its object, but he was a slave to the instruments of his hands. Reynolds was a painter ruined by the seductions of his palette. It is common cant to talk of the failure of his colours, of the secrets of his painting room, of the *nostrums* he employed; all this is well worthy of general criticism, and might pass without a remark, but it is the grand evil to which all this tended that is to be looked at and considered. It is not that Reynolds wasted his time and spoiled his pictures by restless experiments, but far worse; for he suffered at the best of times his love of *picture-making* to interfere with the operations of his mind, the free emanation of his thoughts, and just conception of his subjects, and when he ought to have impressed you with the attributes of the man, he amused and beguiled you by the qualifications of the painter.

It is very much to be feared that the style and mode of practice introduced by Reynolds, together with certain loose precepts, too often taken literally, and without making that allowance which the circumstances of the *period of their introduction* makes necessary, have led to very serious evils, and given a tone and character to English art in no way calculated to exalt it in the minds of people who have judgment, intelligence, and taste sufficient to understand its real condition. There are many points in the character of this great artist which are difficult to comprehend, but no one so perfectly perplexing as his loudly-professed admiration of Michael Angelo! Looking from one end of Reynolds's works to the other, it is impossible to believe that he ever *felt*, in the remotest degree, the peculiar excellences of this great master, and the profoundest *conclave* of critics that ever assembled would be puzzled to discover the smallest trait of evidence that he ever attempted to work in his spirit, or to imitate in any way, the operations of his hand. Had this been the case, had Reynolds taken as his model the Roman school of art instead of the Dutch, no man need hesitate to say that the state of art in England at the present day would have been of a far more exalted and honourable character.

A man who has placed himself in peril will, if he intends to maintain his ground, adopt some means of defence; the writer must therefore remark that he is by no way insensible to the beauties of Reynolds, and that, if he were disposed, he could make out a list of his excellences which would exceed that of his defects. There are two modes of estimating a man, both of which tend to the same end, *the setting him up as an example to follow*; the one by showing in what he succeeded, the other in what he failed. The former having been resorted to much too often, the latter has been adopted, not as the more gracious, but the more necessary.

#### WORKS OF THE OLD MASTERS.

The most extraordinary picture in this collection is the Cuyp in the centre of the middle room, which may be regarded as an example

of a perfectly successful achievement in a certain walk of art: in this particular it stands distinguished from every other work in the exhibition. This picture will not rank, in the common estimation, with those of the highest class of art; but it may fairly be questioned whether higher and more rare qualifications were not necessary for its production, than for the production of any and all that surround it? But this is a point which cannot be discussed in the limits of a short notice. The exhibition of such a work as this is calculated to do a most important service in the cause of taste, and to afford, both to the painter and the amateur, the most desirable information. This work forms not only a standard to judge of the excellence to which this class of pictures may be carried, but as a criterion for the *comparative* merits of the many works executed or attributed to this master. A great number of examples extant, and which go under the name of Cuyp, are either lamentable failures (difficult to admit), or mere worthless imitations. It is works of this character of which a National Gallery should be formed, and not of the promiscuous specimens which are accidentally or misjudgingly brought together; a very small collection would in such case answer a most important purpose, both for improvement in art and in public taste. The merits of this work are exactly of the kind adapted to public instruction, since they require little or no knowledge in common with the painter, but simply a habit of observation in the spectator, which they are not only calculated to respond to, but to induce and to teach.

A portrait by Rembrandt, "The head of an old man," is a striking example of excellence in its way. Its perfect individuality and effective and characteristic details make the vague generalities of Reynolds appear almost disgustingly flat, vapid, and senseless. The silly theory of *breadth*, and the notion of rendering the true appearance of things by a mere general representation, is completely upset, and its worthlessness exposed by this capital work of Rembrandt's. No artist understood better or knew how to practise the rational part of Reynolds's ill-understood theory than the glorious old Dutchman; and the work in question is perhaps one of the most beautiful examples that could be found of the principle in question. It looks almost as if placed where it is by the directors for the purpose of confounding a theory which worked incalculable mischief even in the mind and hands of so intelligent an artist as Reynolds, and has been the bane of art among his disciples and admirers. This "head of an old man" is one of the most perfect examples even among the works of this great *tactician* in art of what painters understand or ought to understand by *BREADTH*, and of the beautiful combination and effect of *generalities* and *particulars*. A painter will see at once the simple *machinery* of the picture, every part of which, except the head and a few items of the dress, has the necessary breadth, and that vagueness which belongs to generalities; but the head has the finished detail of *reality*, the truth and identity of a *bit of still-life*, and that, in addition, effected and produced by a mode of using the tools employed best, or *solely* calcu-



lated, to give the appearances required. The detail is not the result of servile labour, like that of Denner and Dow, which, if employed in the life, size would have been detestable, nor the meaner *niggle* and littleness, the Italian, French, and German productions of the day, all of which display an utter ignorance of the means of carrying out their own intention; but a superior intelligence engrafted upon fruitful experience, a philosophic knowledge of the principles of art and the laws of nature as referrible to the appearance of objects and the sense to which they address themselves. It is this which gives to what is called style or execution its importance, and which distinguishes one species of labour from another. It is a high honour to the English school that it has at least the merit of *appreciating* this kind of excellence, whilst it is glaringly evident that it is neither felt nor understood by any other in existence. Whether the philosophy of this excellence be generally understood amongst English artists, for whose education so little has been done, may admit of a question; but it is proved to be *felt* by its being imitated. This picture affords an admirable lesson to the student, whether painter or connoisseur, and offers a beautiful illustration of a principle of art worked out by the most perfect execution, and rendered plainly evident by the most efficient means.

The head and a few attendant items appear upon the background as a spirited etching would laid in the midst of a soft bed of mezzotinto. This alone constitutes the whole machinery of the picture; the effect of which, seen near or far off, is striking and complete. The *rationale* of this is, that the detail of a *near* object is given in the head, and the vagueness of remote ones characterise the background. There are consequently a truth, a simplicity, and a singleness of effect, which please the eyes of the spectator, and create the charm that is felt. The head and a few other parts emerge gradually from the tender gloom of the soft mass that surrounds them, and, after coming more and more into observation, at last force themselves into notice, the result of which ends in a graphic climax — in a few *scratches*, as it were, of the brush, which *tell* as the most finished detail. All this exists of course independent of drawing, colour, fleshiness, roundness, truth of character, expression, and a look of life and intelligence: the last of these are the HIGHEST excellences of art, and are not wanting in the example before us. *These* belong exclusively to the painter and the man of taste; what has been instanced addresses itself to the operative artist, the amateur, and the connoisseur, and is worthy of their study and attention.

It has been remarked that the conceptions and feelings of Reynolds were constantly interfered with and rendered by one mode, let the subject be what it might. This work of Rembrandt's is a striking illustration of the mode of treatment and execution, being adapted to and tending to enforce and perfect the sentiment intended to be conveyed, as well as the resemblances given; for a further illustration of which his female portraits should be examined and considered.

The Dentist, by Teniers, is another beautiful example of the perfection of art in its way. The story, the action of the figures, their expression and character, as well as the effect and colour, are all of a popular kind, easily understood, and each calculated to make suggestions both for the formation of a good taste, and the correction of a bad one. A person who can feel the *completeness* of a work of art, no matter of what class, that it wants nothing, and that it would be impossible to take any thing away without injury, has seized and possessed himself of the first grand element of criticism, even though he cannot comprehend, in detail, the parts of which his impressions are made up, and much less give learned names to all their particulars. There are no works of a really high order in this collection. "The Ages," by Titian, is the most important; but it is almost entirely an artist's picture.

## MODERN ART.

Amongst the works of our day are many clever specimens honourable to the English school, and of a character of excellence far beyond what any other country can produce. Enough is given of Bird, Newton, Harlowe, Bonnington, Jackson, Thomson, Wyatt, Constable, as the more recent, to make us regret their loss; whilst of such men as Hogarth, Gainsborough, Wilson, and some others, the world has become too sensible of their excellences, whether examples are before its eyes or not, not to feel it will be long before their places can be filled. Of Lawrence there is nothing worthy of his well-merited reputation. Of Liversiege there is more than enough to show that his talent was greatly overrated.

The most important attempt in modern art is "The Raising Jairus's Daughter," by Thomson, an artist lately deceased. It is an example of high art, and a production which will pass with the common observer for much less than it is intrinsically worth. There is some very fine conception in it, and some drawing which is perfect; but there are certain discrepancies in colour and effect, which destroy it as a whole, and render it offensive or unattractive to the eye. This work, to have been the production of a young man, with plenty of the requisite taste, and encouragement surrounding him, might fairly have been regarded as an example of the most fruitful and certain promise; as it is, it looks but like the attempt of an artist who, whatever he might wish and feel, had never encouragement enough to induce him to persevere and to succeed!

On the whole, this mixed exhibition presents a very pleasing, although, as a means of public instruction, rather a perplexing than a useful variety. It is a well-concerted measure to offer these works to public observation at the period when all the exhibitions of the works of living artists are open; and it is calculated to be, and has no doubt been, productive of some good to the public taste. At present, however, all improvement in that important faculty must of necessity be slow and uncertain, until a better foundation is laid for it in an improved

and extended mode of education. Until just principles and notions of art are instilled into young minds, and until these are assisted by practical studies, under the direction of able professors, exhibitions of pictures will be regarded but as public shows thrown open as a speculation, or offered as mere matter of amusement. As long as youth is suffered to grow up with no better notions than are picked up at the drawing-school, where one driveller succeeds another, and boys become men who are *compelled* to make pretensions to taste, and to assume a character they can only support with discomforture and difficulty, the richest stores of art will be opened to them in vain, and its warmest appeal to their sensibilities will be thrown away, wasted, and lost. One pleasant character of this collection is, that in addition to a judicious arrangement of the works, the eye of the spectator is not tortured in looking for merits hid in the gloom of the ceiling, or in the dust of the floor: *here* at least is breathing room for art, as well as for those who would enjoy its productions. The whole thing is highly creditable, both in plan and execution, to the gentlemen under whose management it is placed.

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#### EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THE Exhibition of the Royal Academy is highly honourable to the state of art in this country, and, for the variety and extent of the excellences displayed, is altogether unparalleled in any other. There is this year a more general manifestation of the peculiar excellences which have been patronised and cultivated with the greatest success, and which are almost wholly of English origin and growth. Judging from the tone of the public press, its merits are undervalued, and its defects greatly exaggerated. It is a lamentable circumstance in criticism that it is not sufficiently liberally informed to admit and to estimate what is new to it. Criticism based upon the *study* (when it deserves that name) of a limited number of examples, is incompetent to the task of judging of the RESOURCES of art, so that at each movement, at each departure from the beaten track, art has to contend against obstacles created and opposed to it by those who ought and who would, were their information adequate, be desirous of aiding its advancement. Prescribed forms of opinion, and conventional precedents and examples, naturally attach to every condition of critical knowledge, which is not prepared for a change vivified and kept on the alert by being allied with a practical and experimental power, which power, as a matter of course, belongs exclusively and alone to the artist. When Wilkie left his first manner and adopted another, all the critical world cried out against such a heresy; and had he taken a course for which there was no authority, he could have looked for nothing short of perdition. At every change which the fertile and restless impulse of his genius suggested, he met with opposition as a matter of course, and this not momentary but lasting, because when

opposition springs up it is necessary for a while to sustain it for consistency's sake. That which was Wilkie's case is the case of every artist who ventures to introduce any novelty in art, even though that novelty spring from a natural impulse and a peculiar organisation over which he has no control. Thus, in the collective efforts of a body of aspirants in art, every new attempt is regarded with suspicion, if not with opposition, and only *allowed* to succeed if its author has perseverance and strength to surmount the obstacles thrown in his path. This is one of the peculiar hardships of modern art, one of which ancient art was divested and free; ignorance might, and did no doubt, oppose it, but it had not prejudice put in array against it. Many of the works placed before the public in our exhibitions are met in the spirit here described, nor is there but little of that feeling which will induce a spectator to ask himself *if it be not possible* that the painter is aiming at something *he* may not fully comprehend, or see the drift of, or the end. When a great landscape painter of the day first showed aberrations from the staid manner of his beginning, every body was surprised, and could see nothing but the folly of the attempt; and, during the whole period in which he has continued to make merry with the *wonder* of the public, very few indeed have become conscious of the new and peculiar excellences to which these unauthorised vagaries have led. Had criticism been told their object and intent, it could not have comprehended them. Had it been told here is an artist attempting to make pictures which shall be all LIGHT and COLOUR, and adopting a mode of execution which he intends shall represent the wild variety of nature generally, clouds, waves, trees, and so on, better than any other, it would not have been understood. Had it been said this man attempts to produce effects by means hitherto untried — what others have made dark he has resolved to make light — what some have acquired by great pictorial sacrifices he is resolved to obtain without — he has a genius for the creation of something new in art — it would have met no faith, credit, or respect. Yet the painter sees that out of these licentious efforts a thousand new beauties have arisen, and what is still far beyond this, that a power has been created which, were it allied with some others, would perhaps double the intensity of what has ever existed or exists at the present hour; in this way resembling the power offered by the agency of steam before its applicability was fully proved. None appear to see that by these efforts the sphere of art is enlarged, and its interests and importance increased and strengthened. The productions of many an artist of the present day are in a similar condition; they create opposition by their *novelty alone*, being addressed to a taste which is capable of making no allowance for the boundless resources of art, and hence one cause of dissatisfaction with the productions of modern art. It would be an exceedingly easy thing to prove that *ignorance* is far less the enemy of art than *prejudice*, so that a person totally unacquainted with art, nine times in ten offers a more friendly aspect to its advances than a connoisseur moderately learned. Originality alarms

men who look only for excellence in *precedent*, and who would rather see an imitation merely of what they have learned to consider excellent, because it affords them an opportunity of making a display of their learning, and flatters their self-love.

The critic who has schooled himself into the belief that art must be confined to certain courses, and regards certain specimens which have come under his notice as the produce and the proof of the fact he has assumed, supposes very naturally that all painters are endeavouring to imitate and to rival such productions; and when he sees, that what is offered to his notice bears no resemblance whatever to the idols he has set up, he regards the painter as a bungler who has failed even to show what he meant, never suspecting what he intended. The first step in criticism is to ascertain what was the object of the painter, and to judge how far he has succeeded, it is first necessary to look at what he meant to do!

Every one should remember that in going to see a modern exhibition, he goes to see a collection of pictures painted principally from objects existing upon the spot, and that in proportion as these objects are familiar to the spectator he is the better qualified to judge of their resemblance and truth of representation. It is true that this qualification is not the highest attribute of a judge of art, but it forms a more important item in criticism than is generally supposed. A person who is acquainted with the works of Gaspar Poussin, for instance, and who has always been gratified by his representations of Italian scenery, has a very different impression from such works after having become familiar with the scenes from which they were painted. The supposed *idealised* conceptions of the painter are lowered very much when it is seen and known that these are but common and often degraded portraits of localities, which in themselves afford beauties of a kind and variety to which their *imitations* make but slender pretensions. Thus the splendid scenery surrounding the Sibyls' Temple at Tivoli, the bold and highly diversified rock and valley, the silvery water reflecting the bright sun flashing upon the eye in the foaming cascade, and glittering in the tender gloom of the feathery olive, and gliding with a sort of quiet awe into the deep abyss and dark recesses of the earth, all make up subjects for the pencil, which, to those who have seen with their own eyes and compared with their *imitations*, will appear but feebly and badly rendered, even by the best pictorial representations that exist.

It would appear impertinent almost, and look as if English art wanted an excuse, to point out the endless number of objects represented in the works of foreign art that gain an importance from the bare circumstance of their being drawn from a source with which the spectator is not familiar. One of the cleverest artists of the day observed to me as we were strolling the streets of Rome together, "It appears to me that the old masters had very little more to do than to paint just what they saw." No one need hesitate to assert that having done so, a *portion* of credit is accorded them, which the native

artist, painting from native models, will in vain attempt to procure. A person visiting a modern exhibition thus armed goes in the full force of his critical strength, and, it may be added, in the full and unrestrained disposition to use it.

In addition to this, the visitor of a modern exhibition goes *slightly prejudiced* against it, to an exhibition of ancient art he goes *slightly prejudiced* in its favour; and that the difference between the two, although slight in themselves, amount together to something considerable; and it is not to be overlooked either, that the criticism, both in degree and kind, bestowed upon modern art is of a character somewhat different to that offered to works of the ancient.

However what has just been remarked is of trifling consequence when compared with some other considerations.

In a modern exhibition you see the produce of one narrow locality and of one single year, a period of time which, in the calendar of art, may be regarded as a resemblance of the mathematical point, which has neither length, breadth, nor extent. But in a collection of the works of the old masters you contemplate the gatherings of the whole world of art and of ages of duration. In the first you see a promiscuous assemblage huddled together (we will not say how); in the last you behold a chosen mass, selected with the intelligence of taste, arranged with *convenience* if not with judgment, and culled with the careful hand of prudential speculation.

The Exhibition of the present year is not marked by any striking examples of rare excellence. There are a few efforts in high art, one of a very successful character; but there is generally far too much of the old leaven and alloy, perhaps not much to be wondered at, considering the way in which the pure metal has always been received. A very short period of time will tell us if there is any advance made in its estimation. It is, in the slang of the market, "looking up;" its gaze will be met by the friendly aspect of every true lover of art and its interests.

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## EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS IN SUFFOLK STREET.

THE exhibition of this society is now open, containing various specimens of art to the number of seven hundred and forty-nine. Compared with itself, the produce of the present year may be regarded as fully equal, if not superior, to that of most others; but the journals of the day will of course point out in detail its particular merits and defects. No person conversant with art can examine the highly diversified examples which cover its walls without feeling the truth of a remark, new in criticism, that its most striking characteristic is an exemplification and a display of artistical power misapplied and misspent. No one can look at the talent generally displayed without

feeling a conviction that it is capable of taking much higher ground, and of being applied in a way which would produce results more grateful to the artists, and advantageous to the public and the interests of art. What the circumstances are which would allow to art a free and more promising course, and give to its professors more ample opportunities it is painful to advert to, and difficult in detail to define and explain. To embrace perhaps the whole in one sole proposition, it may be fearlessly said that the exercise of art in the present day has too close a connexion with providing the means of existence to allow its professors the freedom and advantages of which their study and exertions stand in need. I see, or fancy I see, among the aspirants for fame men capable of the highest achievements in art, but at the same time I see at their doors and at their easels attendant obstructions, which must either hold them back, or force them on in a course they themselves, amongst others, must regret they are compelled to pursue. Whether the society in which we live will ever afford the spur necessary to the right kind of exertion, or the curb which tends to check the wrong, is an inquiry of a very speculative character; certain it is, that its constitution is, in many respects, highly unfavourable to art, and the position in which artists are placed in it. This might be illustrated by a host of examples: let us take one. Let us suppose that an artist, by accident or the natural bias of abilities, learns to execute with some address some particular excellence of art: if it happens to be a novelty, it is sure to attract attention. We will suppose that it is a happy arrangement of colour, of which loose vague human forms are made the vehicle. In a society so constituted as to possess the happy prerogative of doing as they please, he will be sure to find admirers, and out of the number of these will come sufficient employment to serve the purposes of existence. This state of things will continue, perhaps, for the whole life of the artist; and this class of admirers will probably rather increase than fall off. What is likely to be the consequence, but that the artist should pursue the course that best pleases his friends and serves his own purpose? He can have no very strong inducement to change his course, particularly as his common wants increase, and his connexion does no more than just supply them. Should he be disposed to extend the sphere of his studies, and produce something new, ten to one he loses his friends and supporters, and he does not like the venture of trying to get a new set. Thus he goes on; what he has done is clever, and deserved in itself at first the support it met with; but since it has been left unsupported and unallied with the true and real matter to which the pure spirit of art belongs, it has fallen even below its intrinsic merits, been tainted by mannerism, and reduced to a mere trick of the palette. If the artist happens to outlive the *dénouement* he is ruined or disappointed, and his patrons no longer value what their better taste ought sooner to have discovered. There are hundreds of artists and hundreds of patrons who stand just in this predicament, and so must

remain, until a more complete knowledge of art finds its way into the community. There are a number of very clever works in this exhibition, particularly in landscape, and some attempts in art of a high character.

There is one very great defect in the constitution of this society, which ought not to pass unnoticed. It ought to be known to all artists, that by a law or an understanding among the members, **THEY** possess the exclusive privilege of having their own works only hung upon the line. Now it is certainly no more than fair that men who support an institution should possess certain privileges, but it is very unwise to exert such privileges to the *injury of the institution*. This must necessarily be the case, if all the best places in the room are occupied by the works of the members, *unless* it can be shown that such pictures are of a higher order *than any that can be sent*. Grant the possibility of good pictures being sent, they are placed in situations in which they are lost to the public, and thus an injury is inflicted upon the character of the exhibition, and upon the institution itself. This evil will be sufficiently apparent, when it is observed that several of the members have sent pictures respectively to the number of 8. 10. 12. 14. and 16. Liberality out of the question—men have to be just to themselves collectively, as well as individually, and upon this principle the error spoken of ought to be rectified.

### THE TWO WATER-COLOUR SOCIETIES.

THE old and the new Water-Colour Societies have put forth their usual annual attractions, and many excellent examples of this beautiful style of art,—the original and unaided produce of English talent,—is presented to the public. In pictures of human interest and high character of subject the New Society stands foremost, and in the skill of execution nothing is wanting. There is a deficiency, however, of which all artists, anxiously aiming at perfection, ought to be made conscious, and to supply which every aspirant ought to put out his strength. There is too much of that *prettiness* which perhaps is almost inseparable from the use of the material.

Something more of the manner and the feeling too of the late John Varley is desirable, and calculated to do away with an unpleasant impression conveyed by the mode of operation which pervades almost the entire whole. There is also a want of that strong perception and energetic rendering of the forms and characters of objects which constitutes the soul of art. A painter cannot afford to have all his energies absorbed in processes and modes of giving effect: to *show* that he aims at these, although he intends something more, is always too much for the observer, who sees with the eye of his mind and feelings as well as that of his body. It is very well known that the processes of water-colour painting are less capable and efficient than those of oil; and to force them beyond their power is but to exhibit their



weakness as well as that of the operator. It would be far better to take the material as it is, and to employ it simply as a means for showing the conceptions and powers of the artist rather than for itself, and to trust to that taste which they say is increasing amongst us for the just appreciation of what is achieved. No one need hesitate to assert that this is just the thing which is not done; and that just in proportion as water-colour art holds out its allurements to this practice above those of oil, so far is it yielded to and seductive. Painters know well that *processes* have an invincible tendency to affect *practices*, and that habit, fashion, self-interest, emulation, and example have each a strong arm to close the portals of a man's just perceptions, and to keep him dozing in the dark when they are closed. A friend knocking at them may occasion their being opened and perhaps left a-jar.

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### ARTISTS' INSTITUTE.

A PROMISING and important movement has lately been made by a large body of artists to form themselves into a society, for a specific object connected with the true interests of their art, *distinct* from the consideration of any advantages of a directly professional character.

So new and so nice a distinction as this has very naturally created, in the minds of certain persons, a distrust and a doubt as to whether any real and well-defined object exists, because the minds of such are incapable of entertaining ideas which extend beyond mere personal advantage.

That they should keep aloof and look coldly upon a project in which they cannot sympathise is easily explained, by considering how closely ignorance and professional pride are associated with each other, and opposed to every consideration but that of SELF.

For the present nothing better can be done for giving publicity, and for creating an interest in the public, who will feel it more readily than a large portion of the profession itself, than printing the clear and eloquent address of Thomas Wyse, Esq., M. P., who presided at a general meeting, held on the 3d of June, at the Freemason's Tavern.

"I venture to call the attention of the meeting to some of the objects which are proposed to be carried out by this Institution, and which I have no doubt will produce the most beneficial results upon art, and the taste of the country. At the last meeting I took the liberty of expressing generally my impressions as to the state of art in this country; what in my opinion had produced, not exactly its depression, but that which had prevented that full development of which art and science was susceptible. (Hear, hear.) I beg to state that I do not trace the state of art in England to any deficiency in instruction, or in the efforts of artists themselves, but I trace it more particularly to a social and a Metropolitan cause. On returning from

the Continent recently, I was much struck by the condition of art in this country, and the position which it occupies, as compared with the state of the fine arts abroad. In London, unless called together as they might be that evening, it was scarcely possible to obtain that community of interests among professors of the fine arts that was to be found in Continental cities, with scarcely a single exception. In London it so happened that an artist of the very highest proficiency in his profession might live at so great a distance from any of his brothers in art as to be almost unknown to them, except through his works and the medium of newspaper reports. Although denizens of the same town, and carrying on the same profession, they were absolutely foreigners to each other. It was to remedy this state of things the present Institute had been established. That each artist might communicate with his fellow, and that their feelings and discoveries with respect to various branches might be known, would result in the mutual benefit of all. (Hear, hear.) In the whole history of art, howsoever high we may go—from Greek art down to its more modern development in Italy—we find that a mutual good-feeling existed among the professors of every branch. If we look to Egypt we find that this feeling prevailed to such an extent that the artists lived together, almost apart from any other class of persons, forming themselves into species of camps or coteries, in which they pursued their various studies. In early Greece artists formed themselves into societies, which mutually bound one with another. The architect, the painter, and the sculptor, united to carry out the development and form of art in every particular. (Hear, hear.) The same principle was adopted so soon as ancient art became an object of interest to the Christian nations of Europe. In Germany it was well known that the artists formed a society almost exclusive, and were bound by mutual affections, interest, and passions; and it was this spirit which caused the great extent of idea, and the splendid works of art that had emanated from Italy. Not only were the arts of Italy thus upheld, but they were also supported by an encyclopædia devoted to the advancement of that object. They found men, like Michael Angelo and Raphael, all united, the intimates of princes, ambassadors, and statesmen,—sufficient to canonise any nation, however great, by their glorious illustrations. (Cheers.) And in modern times there was to be found not a repetition, but a renewal of the same spirit. In my travels through Germany and France I have found a similar spirit. Especially in Germany, Berlin, and Dusseldorf, nothing is more striking to the mind of a traveller than the condition of the artists. They are found not looking at each other as if the laurels one man gained another lost, but endeavouring to emulate each other's example, and to assist each other in the performance of their works. The arts there appeared like a fire which rages upwards and downwards, free as the light we see and the air we breathe, shedding around a feeling of happiness, and conferring the greatest blessings on all who are participators (loud cheers); acting as a development of the intelligence

of a nation, and tending to increase a veneration for the Creator by enlarging that feeling to its greatest extent. The advancement of art, whether we look at the moral philosophy or the political expediency of the case, is of the utmost importance to a country like this, for it is one of the media through which the mind of a nation speaks equally with its literature and its philosophy. (Cheers.) The object of an Institute should be to unite all classes of art, so that the architect would feel it his benefit to call in the aid of the sculptor, and the sculptor that of the painter, not looking merely to give employment to the highest and only the highest, but to all. (Cheers.) It is said in the Scriptures, "There are many mansions in my Father's house," and so I say are there many in art? (Hear.) In Munich every species of art is found developed. There were to be found specimens of the early Greek and the late Greek, the early Roman and the late Italian, both in the works of the sculptor and the painter; there are to be found the frescoes of Schnorr and those of Cornelius. Every one there in his pursuit has the opportunity of ascending to the highest scale. It is by such means, I sincerely hope, that the arts of this country may be placed in a similar position, and that British compositions of equal magnitude and excellence with the *Loggie* of Cornelius, or the works of Raphael and Michael Angelo, may be produced. (Cheers.) This picture I have drawn will, I trust, be a representation of the future life of artists of this country; that it will not be considered a theory, but that it will practically be carried out by a combination of works for the glory of the nation. (Cheers.) To effect this I am convinced the artists of England could not do better than support and enrol themselves members of such an Institute as this, which I am proud to see is now formed, and the objects of which I hope to see carried out to the fullest extent. When I first offered my suggestions upon this subject I had no idea that they would have been so promptly responded to. I had my doubts, and I knew the difficulties which were to be contended with; I knew that men in this metropolis were debarred from associating together from social and other circumstances. I had not anticipated by this time to have found even the *nucleus* of a society such as I hinted at in formation instead of this reality, and, I may add, very distinguished reality before me. (Hear, hear.) I am delighted such an Institution is formed, for it will do away with all grounds of dispute such as are offered by private interests and considerations, all of which tend to disunite and prejudice the great general body. (Hear.) All the bickerings likely to arise from such causes are got rid of, for I find there is no intention to found either a school or an exhibition in connexion with this Institute; no setting up of one branch of art to the prejudice of the other, but mutually to assist in the advancement and development of the whole. (Cheers.) You have heard the resolutions read for the general management of the body, and the grand object is to hold a series of evening meetings in London, where you may bring together the stores which each has collected, and which

will be offered for the mutual benefit of all. I hope you may have the opportunity of seeing men of various talents among you, who, although not artists, may be friends to art, and who may render you an essential service. Art is at present crippled in this country, and I am sure all who have a desire for increasing the intelligence and the high character of the nation will be delighted at the prospect now opened by the formation of such a society as this. I would have you, in this Institute, work upon the mind of the country, not merely by the pencil, but the pen (hear, hear). Each man may in his mind possess a fragment which may be of immense importance to the advance of art, and out of these fragments it is desirable that you should make a whole (hear, hear). Instead of a tessellated pavement, you want a picture (cheers). This can only be done by a periodical publication, however small (hear, hear). The smallest word properly placed, at the proper time, fructifies to good, and may be raised a beautiful plant yielding beautiful flowers (cheers). It will be a noble thing when the artists of this country shall be able to bring together their *pieces* of intelligence on that important subject, and thus assist to raise art in this country to that position in which it ought to stand in all the civilized nations of the world (cheers). The present state of education in this country shows that nothing is to be done without perseverance: the necessity of education generally has been enforced, not by violence, but by a few men armed with reason and common sense, and it is now desired to advance art in a similar manner that a publication of this kind is recommended. At Munich there are two works of this kind published, in which the various styles of art are developed, and which are of the greatest use and importance to the profession, and doing as much honour to the arts as to the literature of the nation. I hope to see this suggestion reduced to practice by the Council of the Institute, and whatever is done put forth with the real name of the writers; and also that we may see, from time to time, illustrations of our poets in the same style as those by Flaxman of the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*. You have my earnest hopes and wishes for your success, and I trust that you will teach, as one of our languages, the philosophy of art, and that this Institute may be the foundation-stone to a new feeling in the body of artists themselves, to their own benefit, and that of the country at large (cheers). I can only add, that I shall ever be ready to offer my humble tribute of cooperation. (Long continued cheering, amidst which the honourable gentleman sat down.)

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### ANECDOTES OF ART.

THERE are three pictures now exhibiting in the British Gallery, to which some curious and interesting particulars are attached. The picture of the "Kemble Family," by Harlowe, is said to have been undertaken to be executed for the price of the materials and the expense of the necessary models. It will form a tolerable guide for forming an idea of the OUTLAY,

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as well as the *rewards*, which are sometimes attendant upon the labour of the painter. The *patron* (it is said) paid the painter about 100*l.*: he now asks for the picture about 4000*l.*!!

The very beautiful picture by Cuyp, "The View of Dort," was brought into this country about eighty years ago, and bought by a Captain Bailey, at that period a great amateur in art and a renowned etcher in the style of Rembrandt, for 70*l.* From him it passed into the hands of Lady Stuart, where it appeared as *two pictures*, that is to say, it was divided in the middle, and the two pictures thus formed were recognized under the *appropriate* titles of *Morning* and *Evening*. It is a great pity that no commentator has taken them in hand; we might have had a most learned essay to prove the wonderful exactness with which these diurnal phenomena of nature have been represented. Practical experience, where fact and truth are concerned, is often of more advantage, and more to be depended upon, than the suggestions of the happiest fancy where this is wanted, as is fully proved in the present case. At the sale of Lady Stuart's collection, this picture was bought by Mr. Brown for 2200*l.*! who, by aid of the experience spoken of, and a certain intelligence of his own, saw clearly that the two pictures *Morning* and *Evening* were in fact but one, namely, a "View of Dort," under an evening effect.

The detached parts were, in consequence, put together, and their junction *mechanically* forms an excellent illustration of what has been remarked when treating of the comparative properties of Oil and Fresco painting, of the *restoration* which may be effected by skilful hands in works executed in the former mode. *Morning* and *Evening* now united form one of the most attractive pictures in the exhibition, and offer one of the most perfect examples in art! It has been ascertained that this picture was painted for the counting-house of a Dutch merchant, a farther exemplification that commerce has ever been the great ally and friend of art!

There is here also a picture of Gainsborough's, to which some highly interesting associations and painful circumstances are attached: it is called in the catalogue, "A Girl with Pigs." It is *this picture* which was bought by Sir Joshua Reynolds at the time poor Gainsborough lay upon his death-bed. I have now before me a letter to which a receipt is attached, both written by the hand of the artist. It came from among the papers left by Sir Joshua, who has put upon the back of it in his own hand writing this touching notice, —

"Gainsborough  
"when dying."

The receipt runs thus:—

"April 20th, 1782.

"Received of Sir Joshua Reynolds one hundred guineas, in full for a picture of 'A Girl with Pigs,' and all demands.

"£105.

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH."

The letter, which bears evidence of the affecting and melancholy condition of the writer, and which appears to have been written in reference to some past misunderstanding or coldness which had taken place, but which evidently had never touched the heart of either party, is penned in a hand palsied by death, although the sentiments and feelings it conveys belong to the warmest and best affections of the living man. It is almost illegible, and couched in the following terms:—

"Dear Sir Joshua,

"I am just to write what I fear you will not read, after lying in a dying state for six months. The extreem affection which I am informed of by a friend which Sir Joshua has expresd, induces me to beg a last favor,

which is to come once under my Roof and look at my things, my Woodman you never saw, if what I ask now is not disagreeable to your feelings, that I may have the honor to speak to you. I can from a sincere Heart say that I always admired and sincerely loved Sir Joshua Reynolds.

"THO. GAINSBOROUGH."

It is worth the reader's while to turn to the 14th Discourse of Reynolds for some Remarks on the genius of Gainsborough, in which there is a reference to this letter; it runs thus: "Of Gainsborough we certainly know that his passion was not the acquirement of riches, but *excellence in his art*, and to enjoy that honourable fame which is sure to attend it. That he felt this 'ruling passion strong in death,' I am myself a witness. *A few days* before his death, he wrote me a letter to express his acknowledgments for the good opinion I entertained of his abilities, and the manner in which (he had been informed) I always spoke of him, and desired he might see me once more before he died."

### REDCLIFFE CHURCH, BRISTOL.

THE lovers of Gothic architecture will be gratified to learn that this beautiful example of the piety and fine taste of our forefathers is about to be restored, under the superintendence of Mr. Britton, a name which has become almost venerable, in association with the Gothic edifices of England.

Abundantly rich in the possession of such treasures, England does not boast an example more intrinsically beautiful, more worthy of preservation, and more interestingly associated, than the parish church of St. Mary, Redcliffe. All who can enter into the spirit of feeling which appreciates this class of architecture, and lend themselves to the solemn charm which it is calculated to inspire, will turn to this venerable relic as to an object of their dearest affections, and all who will connect with this fine old edifice a remembrance of the fate of poor Chatterton, one of the brightest geniuses that ever adorned human nature, will find matter for deep and melancholy reflection.

One ought to speak with forbearance of the follies, weaknesses, and vanities of certain men, who have peculiarly distinguished themselves for such characteristics of humanity, but it is just and proper to denounce them as pernicious examples. All the world knows that it was to the great arbiter of taste — him of Strawberry Hill fame, that poor Chatterton first sent some specimen of his poems, and from whose rejection and treatment he appears, poor fellow, to have taken the fatal tone of his despair. This great man could see no sort of merit in them — the world since has discovered excellences almost unequalled. It is Horace Walpole, for the remark ought not to pass uncoupled with his name, who has said, "that poets and painters may want an equipage or a villa by wanting patronage, but they can always afford to buy pens, ink and paper, colours and pencils." A penny loaf might have saved the starving Chatterton, in his lodgings in Brook Street, Holborn, or afforded a sop, at least, for the fatal

draught which put a period to his existence, and deprived the world of one of its brightest ornaments. Sixteen is an age at which some little pity might be extended towards one who had not learnt to bear starvation, and support the affliction of utter destitution and despair, although aided by the consolation of possessing such worldly consolations as "pens, ink, and paper."

I remember the time when grief for the fate of this unhappy child of genius, neglect, and sorrow, was a passion with me; but the world has been kind enough to cure me of my weakness. Many and many an hour have I spent in the *muniment* room of Redcliffe Church, in which Chatterton pretended that he found the sublime poems of Rowley the monk, the friend and protégé of Cannynge. In my time there stood three or four stout old chests, of very antique character, their hinges eaten away by rust, and their massy locks and fastenings gone. Often have I turned them over and searched round and round, in hopes of finding some secret recess in which some monkish poem might be hid; alas, in vain. I was told, however, that a very few years since these venerable coffers were full of papers of some sort or other, but that for some reason they were now thrown into a certain part of the crypt, where they were left to rot. Having occasion to search for the remains of an old Gothic throne which once stood in the midst of the church, which was described to me to have been formed something like a flower-pot stand, such as we see in green-houses and gardens, and upon which the mayor and corporation used to sit once a year to attend divine service, I found myself in the midst of this mass of rotting papers. After examining some fragments of this throne, which appears to have been curiously painted and gilt, and which was demolished, I understood, by a *Goth* of the name of Stock, I found most of these of a remote date, and many of them were marriage licences, perhaps curious, but it was too cold to stay, and too dark to read. After having bestowed a *benediction* on Mr. Stock, I picked up a little scrap of paper, which appeared like an old-fashioned letter, and looking at the contents, I found the following:—

" R<sup>d</sup>. S<sup>r</sup>.

" This evening William Stock has paid me the money due to me. I therefore desire you'll please to forbear publishing the excommunication agt. him.

" R<sup>d</sup>. S<sup>r</sup>. I am

" Your very humble Servant,

" JNO. COBBE."

It is superscribed, "To the Rev. M. Gibb." (These)

The date appeared to be sixteen hundred and something. I was quite gratified to see that some Mr. Stock or other had got himself into a scrape; it looked like retributive justice in advance of crime.

This circumstance is, perhaps, scarcely worth making a remark

upon; but the destruction directly, and by neglect, of the curious and honoured remains of past ages, is an evil which originates in a want of knowledge and taste of that which, in the vanity of professional considerations, I am disposed to call a want of artistical feeling.

I do not mention the circumstance as reflecting in the slightest degree upon the character of the locality in which it occurred, but I cannot refrain from giving a short account of another act of barbarism which fell under my notice, and which shows with how little of the right feeling certain operations are conducted. On leaving the crypt, I heard the sound of voices and of spades and pick-axes at an angle of it, divided from that part out of which I had just come by a wall. Going to see what was going on, I found some masons and labourers who were constructing a vault near the shaft of a short round pillar, part of the ancient foundation. I saw a fellow tugging at a thigh bone, which, with its fellow *stood upright*, deep buried in the hard-pressed earth around it, at about a foot distance from the pillar. On speaking to the man, he told me they had first found a skull, and as they cleared the earth away, they came upon the bones of the neck, then those of the arms, which were placed upright, and which they had pulled out of the earth, as he was now attempting to do with those of the inferior part of the body. It was quite clear that a human creature had been buried in an upright position; and fastened into the pillar about half way up was the remains of an iron staple eaten away with rust, thus suggesting the idea of a person having been fixed, and left to perish. What was the real fact or history of the case nobody knows. I asked the men if they had said any thing about the circumstance; and their reply was, "What for should we?"

At Gloucester, in the demolition of St. Mary's Church, I saw fellows smashing stone coffins, and stripping columns of a casing of a *late date*, which had another of a very early character *under it* adorned with coloured and gilt ornament. All were smashed by the rude hand of the workmen, uncontrolled by any director or superintendent!

But I forget I am *reviewing* a work put forth by the vestry of the parish of St. Mary, Redcliffe, as an appeal to the public, to give its aid in the restoration of this beautiful and venerable church, which it is hoped will not be made in vain.

The abstract of the report made by Messrs. Britton and Hoskins, is a clear and full explanation of the present condition of the church, and forms in the context a beautiful essay, which may be taken as a useful lesson on the subject of Gothic architecture. The decay of this splendid monument of architectural composition is attributed to various causes, many of which have an antecedent cause, but the greater part is fairly to be attributed to the want of a just appreciation of the value and claims of such venerable remains — to the want of a clear perception of their beauties, or, to embrace the whole in one word, to a want of taste. This remark has no particular local application, the censure is just and general. It avails us nothing to disguise the fact: we are but just beginning to be sensible of our past condition;



and it is very much by the labours of Mr. Britton, Pugin, and others, that we have arrived at a sense of it. The best mode we can adopt for making atonement for our delinquencies is to exert ourselves to restore, sustain, and preserve the inestimable treasures which have been left to our charge, and thus to avoid the reproaches which will attend any farther state of enlightenment, and the sure malediction of posterity.

AN ESSAY ON THE HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS OF SPENSER, IN  
THE POEM OF THE FAËRY QUEEN.

BY FRANK HOWARD.

At the moment when public attention is likely to be attracted to the subjects of the Cartoons, which will be exhibited this month at Westminster Hall, it may induce some greater interest in those from Spenser, if some explanation be attempted of the historical allusions in the Faëry Queen — if some attempt be made to lift “the covert veile” of the poet, and to make those passages intelligible at the present day, which at his own time could scarcely fail to be understood, but which are now, except by a very few, entirely overlooked; and I cannot help feeling, that to this want of intelligence of the poet’s meaning, much of his unpopularity with general readers has resulted. His poetical readers have been indifferent to his meaning, admiring his poetical feeling — his general readers have been indifferent to his poetry, not understanding his meaning. A similar effect has attended Goëthe’s Faust.

Spenser, in his letter to Raleigh, explanatory of his intention in the poem, which, without any impeachment of his power, might be very requisite when only a fragment of the poem was published, says, “In that Faëry Queene, I meane Glory in my general intention; but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our Sovereaine the Queene, and her kingdom in Faëry land.” But in the introduction to the second book he had also explained his intention in this respect.

“Right well I wote, most mighty soveraine,  
That all this famous antique history  
Of some the abundance of an ydle braine  
Will judged be; and painted forgery,  
Rather than matter of just memory.  
Sith none that breatheth living air doth know  
Where is that happy land of Faëry  
Which I so much doe vaunt, yet no where show;  
But vouch antiquities which nobody can know.  
Of Faëry land yet if he more enquire  
By certain signes here set in sondrie place  
He may it find; no let him there admyre  
But yield his sense to be too blunt and base  
That no’t without an hound fine footing trace.  
And thou, O fayrest princesse under sky,  
In this fayre mirrhour maist behold thy face,  
And thine owne realmes in land of Faëry,  
And in this antique image thy great ancestry.

If, therefore, the poem had been finished, we should have had an allegorical picture of Elizabeth and her court.

With this clue Mr. Upton endeavoured to trace out the historical allusions, and has succeeded in fixing many of the characters; but in others he has been singularly unfortunate, though, with the too common fate in literature, he has been followed unshrinkingly in his blunders, without having due credit given him for his more accurate suggestions.

Elizabeth is personified as True Glory, and Gloriana the Fairy Queen; also as Mercilla, Belphebe, and Britomartis. Amoret, the sister of Belphebe, who is carried off by Busirane, is Elizabeth's sister, queen Mary of Scotland, carried off by Bothwell; and the unsuccessful adventure of Scudamour to deliver her, is an allusion to Sir Nicholas Throgmorton's mission (which the poet flatteringly describes as being sincerely intended) to release Mary from the consequences of her (forced?) marriage with Bothwell, in which he failed, and Spenser releases Amoret by the means of Britomartis, appearing so to construe Elizabeth's reception of Mary in England, when flying from the disastrous battle of Carberry Hill.

Mr. Upton considered Florimel another personification of Mary, on account of the mode of her escape from the monster created by the witch.

A little bote lay hoving her before,  
In which there slept a fisher old and poore,  
The whiles his nets were drying on the sand:  
Into the same she leapt, and with the oar  
Did thrust the shallop from the floting strand:  
So safety found at sea, which she found not at land.

Supposing this to be an allusion to Mary's escape in a fisherman's boat to Workington, in Cumberland, after her flight from Carberry. But the other circumstances in the adventures of Florimel, her imprisonment by Proteus, her love for Marinel, "*the lord of the Rich Strond*," who was overthrown by Britomartis, points rather to the unfortunate Lady Catherine Grey, who was imprisoned for having married Seymour, Earl of Hertford, one of the *richest peers in England*, and who was, with his wife, so barbarously treated by Elizabeth.

The trial and execution of Mary Queen of Scots is alluded to in the trial of Duessa, who is also a personification of the Roman Catholic religion, and appropriated to Mary, as the head of that party in England.

Prince Arthur is stated by Spenser to be a personification of "Magnificence, which virtue, for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all the rest, and containeth in it them all; therefore in the whole course I mention the deeds of Arthur applyable to that virtue, which I write of in that book, but of twelve other virtues I make twelve other knights patrons, for the more variety of the history."

Arthur's adventures would, therefore, have been carried through the twelve books, and would have concluded with his finding the Faëry Queen: and from the sonnet of Spenser, prefixed to the first edition of the first three books of the poem, it is clearly pointed out that Prince Arthur is to be a personification of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex.

To the most honourable and excellent Lord, the Earl of Essex, &c. &c.

*Magnifcke Lord*, whose virtues excellent  
Do merit a most famous poet's witt,  
To be thy living praise's instrument;  
Yet do not sdeigne to let thy name be writ  
In this base poem, for thee far unfit:  
Nought is thy worth disparaged thereby.  
But when my muse, whose feathers nothing flitt,  
Do yet but flag, and lowly learn to fly,

With bolder wing shall dare aloft to sty  
*To the last praises of this Faëry Queen.*  
*Then shall it make most famous memory*  
*Of thine heroick parts,* such as they been ;  
 Till then, vouchsafe thy noble countenance  
 To these first labours needed furtherance.

Mr. Upton supposes that Guyon was intended for Essex, from the frequent mention of Guyon's golden sell (saddle), which he thought alluded to Essex being master of the horse: but to say nothing of the ludicrous inappositeness of the master of the horse losing his steed at the commencement of his journey, and having to perform his adventure on foot, as is the case with Guyon, Guyon's adventurss are the subject of one of the books to which the above sonnet was prefixed.

There can be little doubt that Mr. Upton is right in supposing that the adventure of Guyon has reference to the assistance afforded by Elizabeth to Tir Oen, or O'Neale, whose cognizance was the bloody hand (the child Ruddymane); but this brings us to the Earl of Sussex's government of Ireland, and the Palmer, instead of being Whitgift, as supposed by Mr. Upton, is probably Sir Henry Sidney, who acted with and for Sussex, and afterwards succeeded him in that government, and may very probably have been of great service to him therein.

If Sir Samuel Meyrick be right in appropriating a suit of armour in the horse armoury of the Tower to the Earl of Essex, there is a singular coincidence with Spenser's description of Prince Arthur, as wearing "athwart his breast a bauldrick brave"

And in the midst thereof one pretious stone  
 Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous might,  
 Shap't like a ladies head (Glorianas).

The suit of armour has the head of Elizabeth engraven on the breast-plate.

The character of Arthur is enriched with many of the achievements of the British power as a state; the defeat of the armada, in his contest with the Soldan; the rescue of the Netherlands from Spain, in the destruction of Gerioneo and his Seneschal, and the reinstatement of Belgè. This last circumstance led Mr. Upton to appropriate the character to the Earl of Leicester, who assumed a prominent part in the Belgic campaign; but his total want of success in the enterprise, together with other circumstances in Arthur's career, clearly shows this to be a mistake: one, however, in which he has been unhesitatingly followed by all persons who have touched upon the subject of the allusions in the poem.

(*To be continued.*)

#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE letter signed "Matilda Y." shall have a *wherefore* next month, in a full and candid reply. The "point" relative to the Cartoons will not be overlooked. It is strongly suspected that when these works shall be thrown open to the public, no small surprise will be manifested that so much talent should exist in the country, and still remain hidden and unknown. If the correspondent will read and consider what has been and is said in this number on the evils of a want for space for the exhibitions of the works of artists, he will find a tolerably clear explanation of the matter. That artists, "the people who ought to have been aware of the existence of so much talent," should not have been trumpeters of the fact, will admit, I am sorry to say, of more than one explanation; although I still deny what is said about "professional jealousies." Success too often acts as a sedative, both upon men's exertions and intentions as regards the good of others.

THE  
ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S  
MAGAZINE.

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THE CARTOONS.

"The value or rank of any art is in proportion to the mental labour employed upon it, and the mental pleasure produced by it." — SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

It is well known to the readers of this work that, in conformity with the plan laid down in the beginning, it was never intended to comment upon the merits of contemporary artists, or to criticise their works, *except* in especial cases: the present is fairly one of that character, and the remarks suggested by it are offered with no kind of personal bias or desire to lower or exalt the merits of any party concerned, but as a guide to the public, or that small portion of it which shall think such remarks worth its attention.

An independence of thought and action in men will ever be commendable, but whoever has the honesty, the courage, or the rashness, (as it will be variously considered) to assert this independence, must be prepared for the consequences, and at all events ready to support by argument and proof what has been asserted as an opinion or a fact. Above all, he must expect opposition, misunderstanding, and misrepresentation; and whatever his intentions really are, he may regard himself fortunate indeed if he has not attributed to him some of the worst motives by which men are actuated.

The recent movement made in favour of art by Her Majesty's Commission is one which will ever redound to the honour of the country and to the parties immediately concerned, but it may or may not be one which will materially affect the arts of England: *that matter* will depend upon circumstances which are almost entirely independent of any which the present movement involves; while the results, both as regards the talent displayed and the decisions made upon it, notwithstanding public impressions, are exactly what any sensible and observant artist would have anticipated and foretold!

Viewed in this manner the causes and consequences cannot be considered of sufficient weight to call for any very elaborate investigation, or to afford grounds for any very important deductions. In looking at the matter fairly and honestly, and with regard to its merits as a test of what exists, and as a guide to what may be expected, it behoves us to make a just estimate of what has been achieved, and neither to

lift it above, nor to sink it below the standard of its real worth and importance.

If the display of talent now offered to the public be honourable to British art, what might not be expected when time, public appreciation, and the certainty of reward, shall have strengthened and strung the powers and energies of artists? What are the crude unformed examples now before the public but an illustration of the powers as well as the weakness of artists — of efforts unaided by the necessary education, and unsupported by the necessary reliance both on self and others? If real encouragement and taste should spring up in this country, in less than three years the present exhibition will come to be regarded but as a dead failure, when put in comparison with what will ultimately be brought about. No person who knows what excellence is, can regard the present display but as the promise, and not as the achievement of any thing great or honourable in a popular and a national sense, however praiseworthy it may be individually.

The surprise which has been generally manifested, that so much talent should exist in the country in a state of obscurity, is to be explained in two ways. The most direct cause of this is to be found in an evil with which the public generally are unacquainted — an evil which the habitual passiveness and patience of artists have allowed to increase to an extent which has at last begun to cry loudly for a remedy. This evil is *the want of space for the exhibition of pictures*. Hundreds of artists exist who have never had an opportunity of showing, in any thing like a fair way, what they are capable of doing. As a case in point, *it is said* that one of the young aspirants, who has obtained one of the highest prizes, and whose work *perhaps* possesses the highest merit of the three so favoured, has never been able to obtain admission for any picture he has sent for exhibition! Whether this be the fact or not, there are many artists, some of whom could be named, who never could procure a place in an exhibition room. There are people, I am fully aware, who regard this circumstance as a wholesome check upon the increase of artists, but were it made their own case, it might then appear to have a spice of cruelty in it; for whoever has looked into the progress of artists, and the various modes and degrees in which talent first indicates, and then unfolds itself, will see there often good reason for judging of it with diffidence, and treating it with tenderness: perhaps it is better to give assistance to the formation of a hundred bad artists than to oppose the progress of a single good one. Certain it is that instances are to be found where the brightest career in art has been heralded in by the most unpromising beginning. Let any one refer to the two specimens of the powers of the late Sir David Wilkie, which were lately exhibited, with the rest of his splendid productions, at the British Gallery, for a proof of the truth of this assertion, if indeed any such be wanted. It is, therefore, not at all surprising that the names of artists whose works are marked with honour, and now seen for the first time, should be utterly unknown to the public ear.

Another reason why the present display of talent has created surprise, is one which has its foundation in the insufficiency and feebleness of public information and public taste. Whoever has witnessed with the eye of an artist, and the intelligence which belongs to true taste, what has long been doing in this country in art, must have been fully prepared for all the excellence which Westminster Hall at this moment presents, and might even have *expected* much more. This want of information is a subject which every writer, particularly one who is less anxious to make a display of himself, than to serve the cause he has undertaken, ought to treat with the utmost delicacy, and speak of in terms of the highest respect, since it is impossible to charge them with ignorance, who have had no means of acquiring information.

It is very easy, therefore, to account for the surprise manifested, although it is at the same time another evidence that the *capabilities* of British artists have not been duly appreciated or even acknowledged. While this is flattering to art in one sense, it is humiliating in another, at least it will appear so to those who know what *might* have been achieved, if other powers had been called into action, or perhaps the same employed under more favourable circumstances. It is one of the grand evils of a defective state of public information, that the promising and the good are always in danger of being passed over unobserved, and their unfortunate authors consigned to neglect, loss, and ruin; so that any circumstance which *awakens* public attention may haply *direct* it to the object which both humanity and taste point out — often in vain.

The approbation thus won from the public may serve to quiet and soften certain lamentations made over the arts of this country, when compared with those of others; and instead of regretting what we want, we shall, perhaps, learn to appreciate what we possess; and the nations of the Continent will not be the only people who *attempt* history and high art.

In a state of true taste and knowledge of art the *capabilities* of English artists would long since have furnished a ground for the fullest and securest hope in all who are anxious for the welfare and advance of art, and that the opposite condition should have led to opposite conclusions can surprise nobody acquainted with the subject. Every exhibition gallery teems with proofs of the capabilities of the artists, and what may in one sense be called the perversion, or the misapplication of talent; but it appears as if it had remained until the present hour a secret or a difficulty, how to engage and employ it, although it is plain that it is to the nature of this employment it will ever owe its character and its claims. The present display is a full illustration of this fact; here are a set of men who have been suddenly transformed from the humblest dimensions to the gigantic proportions of epic and historic magnitude. If any fact could open the eyes of the world to the necessity of an improved system of education in art, in order to lay the foundation of that knowledge and taste upon which its best interests are founded, this might do it; and it may fairly be

hoped that this will awaken a suspicion in some minds that the system pursued, and the results attendant upon it, are not quite so perfect as they might be, and that it will be at last necessary to adopt a better. If what is produced be honourable to the country, and that no doubt it is, there is no intelligent artist in it who is not fully convinced that under other circumstances that honour might have been increased tenfold, and this by the operations of men who are all engaged in the exercise of those branches of art which are generally considered to reflect no credit upon the country !

It is very natural for those who are not judges of art to be led away by an impression, that the works presented to their notice, and marked by the approbation of the commission, are to be taken as examples of what is excellent and worthy of becoming a guide in judgment and taste. Considered in this way, they offer themselves to criticism, and, as far as they are calculated to *mislead*, to censure.

The first impression given to an intelligent observer is, that the subjects generally chosen have no sort of connection with, or allusion to, the time, place, and circumstances of the occasion. This is a common-sense objection to which genius itself must bow down ; yet what homage has it received from the aspirants before us ?

The first work on the list is entitled, "Cæsar's first Invasion of Britain." Now what is the *import* of such a subject, and what is the fact it records — what is gained by bringing such facts pictorially before our eyes — to what feeling or faculty of mind or body does it address itself, and what species of intelligence has been demanded and employed in its production ? The Athenæum has very sensibly remarked upon this work, "that its import is the degradation, not the exaltation of England;" and continues, "the conquest of England might furnish a noble inspiration to the French Academician, but amounts to an objection, when the destiny of the work is considered." There is no merit whatever, therefore, in the choice of subject, although the ability to select is the first and most important item in the qualifications of a painter.

Of incidents there is nothing — no peculiar illustration of the event, the circumstances which lead to it, or the results which spring out of it ; it is the bare literal matter of fact of history ; the force and comprehensiveness of the story weakened by the medium through which it has passed, and not strengthened, vivified, and illustrated as it ought to be, and as it is capable of being made by the peculiar means by which it is rendered. As there is nothing of the nature of an appropriate episode or incident, so is the main action defective, puerile, and commonplace. For incident you have a *figure* commanding, a standard-bearer about to make a leap into the sea (agreeable to the fact), men pulling a rope, a miserable wretch hanging to the bridle of a horse, and few of his companions in offensive attitudes. There is no instance of noble daring or heroic sacrifice in the defence of "country," no dying patriot, unable to offer further resistance by his hand, cheering his hard-pressed compatriots by the last shout of his feeble

voice. So little opposition is offered to the insulting invader, that its feebleness looks like imbecility and cowardice, while the victory over such a set of miserable creatures can add but little to the laurels of the conqueror. The squalid wretch hanging to the bridle of the horse must be a maniac escaped from some cave asylum in the absence of his keepers, who have fled on the news of the invasion.

The conception of the main action and the principal character is as puny and false as the subordinate. Cæsar himself is a perfect abortion, and the violent action in which he is shown is worthy only of the leader of a mob. Let any person of common sense (the best philosophy in all things, and the best guide in art) reflect for a moment on the mode in which a great conqueror would act in the direction of a victorious and long-trying band, upon whose courage and discipline he has the most perfect reliance;—would he shout and use violent action like a fugleman, or a drill-sergeant?—or would he give his commands with the calm dignity which indicates a conviction of their being fully obeyed? The sword in his hand, instead of the usual *baton* of authority, belongs to the same mistaken character.

In descending to the technical parts of this design, there is as little to applaud as in that portion which is dependant upon the mind of the artist for its importance.

There is, properly speaking, no composition in the design, the whole is a confused mass without object or purpose. The first principle of composition is a certain division of the whole into groups, which relieves the eye, and allows the mind to take in part after part, until it grasps the whole in one well-arranged mass. In this particular, notwithstanding the nature of the subject—the turmoil and *confusion* of a battle—this composition has less claims to respect than any one of the whole number—in no one of them is a less clear knowledge of this important principle of art exhibited. In effective arrangement there is nothing. Of bad drawing there is abundance; witness the short arms, the feet of Cæsar, and most other of the feet are as feeble as the scrawling of a school-boy. The figure on the left hand pulling the rope has had his spine shifted from the centre of his back into his side. Worse than the drawing is the character of the figures—they are puny, dwarfish, vulgar, and commonplace, such as the *popolaccio* of Rome itself could scarcely furnish. Dignity or beauty of form was hardly to be expected, but an army of brutes, instead of men, is what no artist of sense would introduce. The best that can be said of the drawing is, that it is rather a dexterous copy of the model taken without selection, and executed without any other intelligence or feeling than that conferred by practice and imitation merely. In the whole there is not one original position or combination, while the parts suggest recollections of Michael Angelo, Le Brun, and others.

“Caractacus led in Triumph through the Streets of Rome” is an inappropriate subject. A British captive led in triumph to make a Roman holyday! Need more be said to point out the weakness and the mistake in the choice of the subject? It is but justice, how-



ever, to the artist to observe, that if precedent will furnish a sufficient excuse, plenty of it may be found, particularly in scriptural subjects, where the Divinity himself is frequently represented in situations which do dishonour to Him, and violence to the feelings of all right-thinking people, who can but regard such exhibitions as a kind of graphic blasphemy. It is apparent in this design that the artist has not thought or depended sufficiently upon himself; there is clearly nothing original in the conception nor in the treatment of the subject. A work much worse drawn and put together, giving evidence of this, would have been more meritorious and promising. There is such a work in the collection, which is full of defective drawing and detail, almost entirely devoid of that address and skill of hand which the commonest powers can achieve. This is No. 16., "The Death of Lear." In this design the sentiment, the soul of art, is perfect, and on this account alone it deserved the highest premium, although for reasons clearly apparent it would have been impossible to give it. It wants but that which the most ordinary practical talent could bestow to make it almost perfect. There is a gleam of this same mental light in 125., "A Witch led to Execution," with the same defects. As the work of a young man the "Caractacus" is highly creditable; but whether it be the *tocsin* or merely the *knell* of public approbation remains to be proved.

No. 105. "The first Trial by Jury," is decidedly the best-chosen subject, and almost for that reason alone ought to have been honoured as it is. It is a matter of doubt, however, whether the best *moment of time* has been chosen or not; perhaps it ought to have been the VERDICT. It is defective in incident, that tells more than the *bare fact*; the subject is capable of a much wider range of feelings and expression, and infinitely more character. It wants earnestness, such as the early masters would have carried into it: there is no evidence that the parties engaged are in the presence of a murdered corpse and the perpetrator of a dreadful crime. No observant person, who has ever entered a court of justice, or the room of a coroner's inquest, can mistake what is here meant, or fail to feel what is wanting.

No. 100. "St. Augustine preaching to Ethelbert and Bertha, his Christian Queen," has no human interest whatever: it is utterly devoid of any mental manifestation, and has but an inferior *modicum* of what is merely manual and artistical. The most ordinary mind, directed to the subject, would without effort beat out a more clear and comprehensive illustration of the story than is here given. What effect would the preaching of an eloquent and reverend person have in a circle of hearers to whom the doctrine put forth was new and striking? Deep and absorbed attention, thought, conviction, doubt, that lively interest which stirs its possessor to communicate with another, and that succeeds in obtaining sympathy or fails; some or other of these would, as a matter of course, have exhibited their several manifestations. Then, again, what sort of a person would have been chosen by the Pope, and sent at the head of forty Benedictine monks, for this im-

portant mission? Let any one look at the personage created by the painter, and say if *that* could have been the man — the great theologian, the revered father of the church, and the future saint! There is one propriety which cannot be denied — the band of monks are worthy of their leader, and the influence of the address is worthy of the source from whence it comes!

In character and expression this design is as puerile as it is in thought, and what there is of a technical kind is confined to the commonest tricks of the schools.

No. 124. "The Cardinal Bouchier urging the Dowager Queen of Edward IV. to give up from Sanctuary the Duke of York," looks like the work of an operative artist rather than as an exemplification of the powers which give dignity and importance to art, and distinguish it as an intellectual pursuit. There is neither address, persuasion, nor purpose in the Cardinal, nor any show of interest in the personages about him. The Queen is devoid of dignity, although an attempt is made to give her it; and of the feelings of the *mother* there is absolutely nothing. The character is mean, devoid of beauty, and the expression vulgar: the *look* and action are those of defiance without the least portion of timidity or tenderness. Which of the two children is more in danger of being taken it is impossible to conjecture, any more than what is *intended* by the two female heads just above them, whose homely character make them remarkable. The composition, as a whole, is not objectionable; but there are some lamentable discrepancies in parts, so that portions of one figure appear as if they belonged to another. It was necessary to give to the draperies something of the character which belonged to the times; but to lose sight entirely of that principle of art which demands a certain conformity of *fold* and division, to shape and limb is a fault. On the whole, this work fails in the higher attributes of art, and both in pictorial conception and execution is extremely feeble and deficient.

No. 128. "The Fight for the Beacon," like No. 64., is a mere display of animal or brute force; and if Reynolds's remark that "the value and rank of any art is in proportion to the mental labour employed upon it, and the mental pleasure produced by it," has any truth in it, this design has very slender claims to attention. Looking at the merit of the work itself for what it professes to be is one thing, while regarding its pretensions in what it aspires to as appropriate to the occasion is another, of a very distinct and different character; and here it may be remarked that this ought to have formed a very important consideration both with the artists and their judges, while the results prove it has been but little regarded by either.

The five works to which the premium of 100*l.* has been awarded are paralleled and surpassed in merit by many others, and might on that account be passed over without a remark. There is one, however, which offers itself to observation, because it is remarkable, principally, for a mere display of the figure, and a set of commonplace actions and postures, which have been familiar to observant eyes from

time immemorial. Its grand defect is that it displays no thought; its only merit is that it shows some dexterity of hand and eye; as regards execution in drawing it is very defective. This is No. 78., "Boadicea haranguing the Iceni." The action of the queen is commonplace, and the drapery that of a *bacchante*. There is no one incident upon which to rest, no circumstance of an illustrative character, no one fact, none but the bare matter-of-fact of the story. The whole design is utterly devoid of thought, invention, or novelty of any kind.

As a good deal of talk is made about the advantages of the continental schools, and one of the prize Cartoons (No. 64.) is offered as a proof of their superiority, it may be well to point out some productions which emanate from the head quarters of art, Rome, as affording some evidence of the purity and accuracy of design which are supposed to be derived from an authoritative quarter. No. 4. is one of these, No. 7. another, No. 39. another; and another is No. 120., and No. 140. is a good example of the French school!

It will, of course, be a question in the reader's mind, it certainly ought, by what kind of impression, and by what species of deduction, has the writer of these remarks come to a conclusion, *apparently* so much in opposition to those of the judges, upon whose impressions and deductions the decision has been formed. It has become common cant, particularly with a certain class of pretenders, to assume that the opinions of artists themselves differ so widely upon the subject, and the productions of their art, that the opinion of the profession is worth but little. Perhaps if the opinions of men in general were fairly and impartially examined, there would appear far less of disagreement than is generally supposed; and in most cases in which artists appear *widely* to differ, the separation is not a *chasm*, or a gulf, as may be supposed in this case, but a mere line which, whilst it serves to distinguish, connects. A difference of opinion is as natural as a difference in the stature, form, and complexion of the human creature, and a claim to advance and uphold it as justifiable as a man's birthright. Some allowance, therefore, without its being asked for, will be conceded upon a principle of right, and the rest may easily be made up by taking into consideration certain circumstances, which will speak for themselves when they become known.

The first consideration which tends to *reconcile* and *adjust* is this: better examples of what is desirable for the honour of art, and *as a guide to public taste*, than those chosen, were *perhaps* not to be found in the number of specimens sent; but this by no means should convey the impression that better are not required; and it is again asserted that these might have been, and will be forthcoming, whenever the abilities of a number of artists, who are at hand, are called into action, or when those which have been employed shall have had a fuller opportunity of developing themselves. It is not that English artists are incapable of doing better, or that the best generally has not been selected; but, that the best displayed is unequal to its objects, in its two grand essentials, namely, —

As an example of the talent of the country.

As a guide to public taste.

The last consideration, which will tend to reconcile an apparent discrepancy of opinion relative to the merit of these works, and the decision made upon them, if the writer's opinion be as correct as the facts, is a very important and comprehensive one; and, if considered in all its bearings, cannot fail to show that circumstances did probably thwart, and interfere with the intentions, judgment, and ultimate results of the decision.

Let the reader take the names of the judges as they stand in the "Catalogue of the Cartoons, &c."

Lansdowne,	Richard Westmacott,
Robert Peel,	Richard Cook,
Samuel Rogers,	William Etty.

From this point let him pursue the thread of the argument, and the explanation which follows, and then judge for himself.

The mode of voting was as follows: A list of pictures was made out by each party, and marked as entitled to the premiums; and the works which obtained the greatest number of *marks* upon such lists were adjudged the prizes.

Now we will suppose *any work* to have been the object of contest. If it happened that this work obtained *two*, and four other works obtained *one mark each*, that work having the two marks would, as a matter of course, succeed! The fallacy of this mode is clearly indicated by the efficiency of a better. If the mode by ballot had been resorted to, supposing the same work to have been put in nomination for deciding upon, the box would have contained two white balls and four black. If we suppose an inferior work by any chance to have been chosen, we see at once by what means it might have succeeded against one of a superior character.

If we go to the investigation of how it could have happened that a work of inferior merit should have been chosen, we have a wide field of speculation before us, with a great many obstacles in our way: but it is possible still to step between them, and to make some advance in our journey.

It is no disparagement whatever to the three gentlemen who so kindly undertook this onerous task, to say that their acquaintance with art, with all its manifold characters and attributes, cannot be considered so comprehensive and complete as that of the three artists who were associated with them. There is such a thing as amateur taste in every pursuit, which is distinguished from artistic and professional; but that we will let pass.

If we suppose any one work to have struck two of the amateurs as deserving, it was of course marked, and succeeded as has been described: but if we reflect for a moment, we shall see that it is far more likely this sympathy of taste should exist between amateurs than artists, who are naturally led to approve that which they feel, to feel that which they study, and to study that which they know and approve. The pro-

vince of one artist, made up as it is of relish and acquirement, will be found in scenes of tenderness, in the amenities, the enjoyments, the pleasures of life; another in scenes of strife, heroic action, and bold adventure; another in the sage philosophic and reflective—in the display of the intellectual and moral, instead of the physical and manual. With these facts before our eyes, and other considerations which will naturally suggest themselves, is it possible to doubt but that the choice of artists would be more diversified than that of amateurs, and that there would be less chance of agreement amongst them? Excellence is not confined to one class of subject, or style of art; so that pictures may be equal in merit in different ways, and the choice between and among them will be guided entirely by the taste, by the *kind* of merit they possess, and not by the *quantity*. Let any one refer to the three names of the artists, and ask whether it *can* be supposed that they could respectively make choice of the same picture, or kind of picture. But if a similar test be applied to the amateurs, making every allowance for difference of taste, but few reasons will appear why they should not; and, as regards the abstract question of excellence, it is probable that they would. Now, if the inquirer will reflect that this collection of design, amounting to 142, contained perhaps half that number upon which a question of claim and superiority might be raised, it will be seen at once that a pretty large field was opened for the exercise of this faculty of choice. It will not be overlooked that there were but ELEVEN opportunities of decision, and seventy-one opportunities of choice; so that it is *possible, barely possible*, if you please, that the whole number of votes might have been divided, and distributed *singly* among sixty-six different designs.

Without assuming an extravagant case, it becomes a rational query whether the mode adopted did not leave that in some degree to *accident*, which ought to have been governed by the most absolute *certainty*; and whatever may be thought of the decision itself, the principle upon which it was conducted cannot be considered unobjectionable.

Adhering to the real facts of the case, it ought to be noticed that the nobleman whose name stands first upon the list was absent from indisposition, and on that account an extra advantage was thrown on the side of the artists in point of numbers. So that if there be any thing to complain of or regret, it rests upon the mode adopted, which it is believed is the usual one, and not with the spirit and intention in which the plan originated and was conducted.

No man who loves truth, and no artist who is swayed by a love of his art and an ardent desire to advance his interests, can wish to prejudice and mislead the public opinion; because sense and observation point out the better its direction the better its results, and that every advantage afforded the public returns upon the painter. Every member of the profession is therefore bound to regard the course it takes with a jealous eye, and to apply his strength wherever he sees the current likely to take a wrong direction. If any thing like this were under-

taken with the conscience and energy the subject demands we should soon see art in a very different condition to that in which we find it, and of which it is common enough to *complain*, however rare it may be to use the smallest endeavour to *correct* it. Success is always grateful to men; and there are few indeed who, feeling its advantage, will stop to consider upon what title their claims are supported. Neither is it a man's immediate friends who are likely to wake him from his pleasant repose. Whoever knocks at the door of his dormitory, whatever may be his purpose or his errand, is likely to be treated with the same kind of respect we bestow on an ostler or a coach-waiter at an inn, who rouses us at an unseemly hour to tell us it is time to depart. The old and experienced have a licence to lecture the young, independent of any privilege they may choose to assume upon the strength of such qualification. It may not be imprudent to *wish* that the successful aspirant in the present instance should keep a watch upon that infirmity which proved fatal even to angels, and has always been found more than a master for mortals, and not believe that those who are loudest in their praise are their best friends, nor be led to suppose that they have triumphed over all the difficulties of the art, and all the men engaged in it. It is exceedingly worthy of observation, in particular by those who have succeeded and those who would form a correct idea of the state of art in this country, that there are a set of silly people who are endeavouring to swell into a triumph that which others, perhaps, will be disposed to regard as an accident: both are to be viewed with rational distrust. It is very difficult to steer clear between two parties—the one fancying that nothing in the nature of high art can be achieved in this country, the other believing that all that is desired has been effected. No person of the least intelligence can read the absurd opinions and remarks of a portion of the public press upon this occasion without a feeling of pity, disgust, and fear for their mischievous tendency, that they may affect both the interests of art and artists, and serve to lead the public astray. Men soon get too old for this delusion; but there *is* a period when they are too young to be proof against it.

As far as the gentlemen engaged in this decision can be considered as representatives of the public, and as far as their decision goes to elevate those they have chosen above those they have neglected, so far does their present annul and invalidate their former judgment. The very persons to whom their applause once gave consequence and reputation are now denounced and rendered insignificant by the censure passed upon them, if what has been done is to be taken in that light,—an excellent example of the value of public opinion, as well as the state of public enlightenment on the subject of art!

If public judgment were infallible, it is clear that such men would never have been placed where they have been or where they are by the fiat of the commission. In certain inferences which have been made to the injury of some of the most highly-talented artists in the

country, and to the body generally to which they belong, no person who cannot believe such to spring out of sheer malignity can see anything in them but the grossest stupidity. To talk of the talent of the veterans in art being shrouded by a decision half accident, and based upon a *test* by which the profoundest synod of critics could argue nothing definitely, as far as it is not childish, is laughable. Setting aside choice of subject—the invention of episode and incident, the introduction of truth, and variety of character—the whole display is lamentably deficient; and it requires no deep insight or argument to prove that a youth fresh from the drawing-school, who has long had the crayon in his hand, perhaps from an inability to wield the pencil, is likely enough to be the equal of his master: but the time comes in after-operations by which their respective powers are submitted to the true test, which it is well not to anticipate even by a remark. Whatever may be the charge against the old stagers, the merit of a prudent distrust, in results based upon insufficient *data*, will not be reckoned among their weaknesses. If it were at all the fashion to do anything like justice to a body whose defects furnish so fertile a theme, and which it is impossible entirely to overlook, there are certain circumstances which would not be left to take their chance and remain hid, or come into notice as accident may direct. The Royal Academy is called a useless institution—is regarded as a body of graphic monks, who absorb all the reverence due to art, and appropriate all the honours, because nameless men have sprung up from obscure corners, and stripped the laurels from their brows. This is a complete proof of their uselessness, and that the country can do very well without them. Nobody can doubt this, *except* those who are sufficiently acquainted with the subject to have the knowledge of one little fact connected with it, which is, that these obscure men, who have sprung from some unknown region into notice all at once, by their own *unaided energies*, were all generated and matured in the schools of the Royal Academy,—no, not all, only NINE out of the ELEVEN who have obtained the prizes! Two are students, who have received the gold medals, and two the silver.

This is not a defence of the Academy; but really, as a matter of justice, it is impossible to hear with any patience this institution charged with *uselessness*;—an institution self-created and self-supported, which forms the native ore of its own proper territory; has *coined* a mass of wealth, out of which a sum of about three hundred and fifty thousand pounds has been distributed and applied to the noblest and most beneficial purposes; and from whose schools many thousands of men have been sent forth to mix with the world, and to disseminate the elements of a good taste, and the principles of art. It is impossible that any one can be so perversely blind as not to see the direct and powerful influence which taste and the knowledge of art exercise upon the minds and morals of a people, upon their commerce, their manufactures, and upon every production of ingenuity and industry. To deny or to refuse honour to the source from whence

such mighty advantages flow, is at once evidence of the most impenetrable hardness of heart and obscurity of intellect.

There is certainly one heavy charge which *may* be brought against the Royal Academy. It has made too many painters without a proportionate increase of the patrons of art! And while this fact points to an evil in society, it indicates clearly the means for its cure. It shows clearly that as far as a knowledge of art has a tendency to procure respect, and make patrons and men of taste, they may be created by an improved and judicious mode of education. But these considerations more properly form the themes of other essays, and are better adapted to other occasions.

As was to be expected, there are various opinions upon the justice and propriety of the decision itself, but there is but one upon the perfect integrity and uprightness of purpose with which the whole matter was conducted.

As a kind of *coda* to the piece of criticism which has been played upon these works, it may be well to recal a few snatches of foregoing parts, for fear they should not be marked sufficiently strong to be retained by the memory. First of all, it is asserted that these remarks are made without bias for or against any individual, but solely and expressly for conveying a right impression. The display put forth in Westminster Hall is spoken of as a kind of triumph of British art: so let it still be considered, for that it is. But, let it not be taken as a sample of what this country is capable in art, for that it is not. It is not the material but the mental man that is the object of *high art*, — it is not man acting by the agency of his bones and muscles, but under the influence of his intelligence. Almost the entire number of the cartoons, therefore, offered no examples of high art.

To all persons well acquainted with the capabilities of English artists, what has been produced is just what was expected. In relation to foreign schools, we stand just where we stood before, with this slight difference, that the public has seen *that* achieved which it had not knowledge enough of the subject to anticipate.

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Since writing the foregoing, the commission has extended the third order of prizes to TEN other productions, which have been considered worthy of that *honour*. Among these are the works of certain artists with whom it will not be considered a very heavy misfortune to fail: some even might go far enough — as all things are comparative — to regard that as an advantage. It is certainly a circumstance in a man's favour, when if even he has not lived long enough to contend successfully against the superior abilities that may suddenly spring up to oppose him and strip the laurels from his brow, that he has lived too long to suffer by the torments of envy or jealousy, or disappointment even, and just long enough to know to a nicety what to expect, and to feel no surprise at anything that may happen.



## LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT.

SIR,—As the judges have pronounced upon the merits of the cartoons, it will become a natural question how they have acquitted themselves in this serious duty.

The works chosen might have been expected to be remarkable for originality of thought, poetry of composition, simplicity of action, philosophic grouping, beauty of line, and of attitude and expression of the passions. Let it be temperately inquired whether this is the case; for in these characteristics of high art, some of the rejected drawings stand prominently fine. Ten of the elect are from English history, which looks oddly, when the option of choice beside was from Milton, Shakspeare, or Spenser; intended (as one would have supposed) to afford subjects for the exhibition of our artists' strength in the highest aims of their profession: but, it appears, commissioners in general know little, and care less, about these (to them) valueless points; else would they have selected works so signally deficient in newness of subject, so stale in composition, and in design offering the unmitigated rawness of casual life merely?

The conclusion must necessarily be, that works of high intellect were in no way desired; but rather varieties of figures arranged together, by way of illustrative pantomime, of certain events in British history, in a showy and decorative style. In some such manner as this the commission might have worded their invitation, and thus have escaped the charge of duplicity: for if English history was (and it appears it was) the end of the competition, it should have been stated, so as not to have lured forward men of real genius, for the sole end of their being slighted.

I would here reprehend the rash and indecent haste of the judges, in thus pushing before the public these, their crude decisions, upon at least (collectively) fifty years of intellectual labour, in entire disregard of public opinion, and without the shadow of a contingent good.

To conclude—I trust "The Artist and Amateur's Magazine," and other scientific works, will do their duty to all. Let them consider that long studious exertions wait their judgment; and, if conscientiously believing in the verity of the judges' decisions, they will avow it: if, on the contrary, it shall appear that the decisions have been weak and capricious, their duty as journalists will be too clear to need any suggestion from,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

AN ADMIRER OF ART.

## ANSWER.

THE judges in the matter of the Cartoons are too much men of sense and men of the world not to be fully prepared for at least a partial dissent from their decision, if nothing worse should be offered to them. That they have had a task of the mightiest, most delicate, and at the same time most ungrateful character to perform, all will admit; and looking impartially upon the judgment, and the peculiar circumstances of the case, considering the condition, kind, and extent of public education, and the *consequent* want of knowledge attendant upon it, the fiat of the commission is as perfect as rational expectation could anticipate. Perhaps it would have been better had a larger number of gentlemen been engaged in it; but if this leaves anything to

regret, there is still much to rejoice at, and be satisfied with. This the writer of the letter would feel, or ought to feel, in a peculiar way, were he an artist. If the decision were marked with less propriety than it is, it would demand that the artist should speak of it with tenderness and respect. The journalist who assumes to exercise the function of a guide in public opinion and in taste might be allowed to go a little further. The neglected condition of art, in all that relates to its high offices and claims, places those who are interested in its welfare in a situation in which it becomes a matter of policy, as well as a labour of love, to applaud any movement made in its favour; so that it is not a matter of criticism as to the *mode* in which the movement is made, but a matter of exultation that it is *made at all*.

The writer of the letter will find some of the queries he has put replied to in the first article; and a little reflection will lead to the conclusion that the *decision* is precisely that which was to be expected. There is nothing whatever surprising in the fact, that the highest principles of criticism should not be employed in the present instance; when it is remembered that they are not only generally neglected, but slighted, in places and in instances where they ought to be peculiarly respected. If we reflect that in all the schools, with the practice of which we are acquainted, it has been, and continues to be, the custom to offer and to award prizes for a *mere display of the material man*, we ought not to be surprised that such a display should succeed against originality of thought, invention of incident, poetic conception, appropriate action, character and expression. As long as it continues the practice in academies to reward young men for such subjects—for instance, as a man lifting a weight, pushing against a wall, or pulling a rope or a stick, it will appear very natural that a mere display of the human figure should satisfy ordinary judgment and taste. No one, of course, will suppose that the ability to represent with truth and effect the objects which are the real and direct means of art is not essential; but it is a sad mistake when the means become the end. It is the practice of all the schools of the continent for the student to use the crayon continually, and to draw with cold and mechanical accuracy the form of the object before him: in this way he learns a certain number of positions—that is to say, he learns the outline of the *boundary* of the figure *merely*, while the thousand varieties that present themselves in the prominences and hollows of its projection and roundness, from and towards the eye of the spectator, if not entirely neglected, are only subordinate in study and consideration. In order to remedy this evil, Sir Joshua Reynolds directed the students to *paint* their studies, and not to draw them. This was an innovation, and has been but partially followed. In the same way, if a more efficient mode were recommended, it would probably meet with no attention. In the present day, in the present condition of things, in the present case, we must pass over certain obstructions; and although we may regret to leave them lying in the path of others, whom we may wish to impress with an idea of our attention, perception, and knowledge, it is better to do so for the sake of *going a-head*, than to stop labouring at what we have not strength enough to effect, until we ourselves become an obstacle in the way. It appears a condition of all human progression that certain obstructions are doomed to yield to the direct means employed for their demolition, whilst others appear as if committed to the charge of time, and left to gradual decay. Thus, when looked at, they present something of the appearance of those *piles* of earth and rubbish which we see *left* by the labourers who are employed in levelling and improving the highways: they last for a time, and indicate, while they

last, the former condition of things. It would expose a man to no small obloquy to say that the exhibition of the Cartoons is an event of no importance in art, is an achievement of no honour or credit, and the decision upon them of no consequence; and yet, looking into futurity, and the *necessary*, not the *probable* advance of art, they can be considered in no other way.

It is therefore a matter of prudence and an act of philosophy not always to see things as they are, or to name them from the true nomenclature of their merits. It is sometimes a misfortune even to have excellence in the horizon of our glance, when, like the effect produced by looking on the sun, it spots and interferes with everything within our immediate vision.

As for the choice of subjects, the adoption of the old, the stale, the hackneyed, the worn out, is an affair chargeable upon the painters themselves. Invention, according to *some* of the best authorities, has never consisted in the *creation* of a subject, but in the adoption of one—in following the poet and the historian at a respectable painter-like distance. Properly considered, this practice looks much more like a sacrifice to public ignorance than like incense offered to nature, respect for art, or complimentary to the sources from whence the subject comes. A subject recommending itself by its popularity, and having chapter and verse for its support, is considered sufficient for every purpose; but the conviction that it is better to paint what all men *know*, rather than what all have *heard* of or *read*, is good ground to act upon, however much it may be neglected.

If the commission have proceeded upon the impression not to withhold their premiums from those who have done no more than adopt the downright matter of fact of the subject, they have done exactly what they have been taught to believe right by *some* of the highest authorities, and what has been most emphatically recommended by the general practice of the profession at large.

It is neither poetry, nor history, nor tradition, nor the illustration of any particular fact or facts, which is the *first* object of the painter, and the *proper* office of the works destined to the adornment of the Houses of Legislature. It is not the partial, but the universal, which is demanded. It is not the battle which was fought on a certain day, in a certain place, on land or on water, but the *CAUSE*, the motives which led to it, the results which have come from it, which should be illustrated. The fact itself affords nothing more than another instance of successful manœuvre, and bold and undaunted bravery, — facts which are illustrated a thousand times over, and shown by a thousand means. Let us take an illustration of what is meant from one of the battles of Alexander the Great, and attend to the facts. An individual called Alexander, ruling a certain people, obtains a certain victory. He returns crowned with laurels, and is welcomed home by those for whom he has fought and won, — what? — a battle! This is all that is told you by the fact represented. The artist has just given you a part only of the story; the rest you obtain from other sources. The representation also, with what it does give of truth, offers no small quantity of which is absolutely false. Alexander was an ill-favoured pigmy of a fellow: art demands that he should appear a hero of an elevated stature and dignified mien. The people *should* have the character and costume of the nation: they have that of the models from whom they were painted; and, added to this, a number of circumstances are introduced which never existed: in short, the whole is a tissue of falsehoods and absurdities. But there is an excuse for this, — history cannot be painted without it. Then why paint it at all? Because it is customary; it has the sanction of great authority; and even

treated in this way, is regarded as one of the highest efforts and examples of art.

But is there any way of illustrating the moral and meaning of the fact except by the fact itself? Most certainly. A warrior who set out in a just cause returning victorious to the grateful bosom of his country is a theme of a universal character, known to the general information and recommended to the universal sympathy of the whole world. The representation of *such a fact* requires no sacrifice of propriety, nobility, beauty, and diversity of character; and the strong stamp of national peculiarities become its recommendation, while its moral, its purpose, are clear and unequivocally defined. The attempt of Barry, at the rooms of the Adelphi Society, is a subject precisely of this character, and, with the exception of that given by Homer for the shield of Achilles, is unique, and without a parallel in human invention. England may at least claim the honour of an artist who for dignity and comprehensiveness has *thought* on a subject of the highest possible order.

Appropriateness of subject in the Cartoons was not, under all circumstances, to be expected.

With these remarks the reply to "An Admirer of Art," and with which it is impossible entirely to accord, must close.

#### LETTER TO SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

THE following Letter on the subject of what may be denominated the GRAND GRIEVANCE OF ARTISTS, was addressed to Sir Robert Peel by the Editor, to which the accompanying answer was received:—

The same *passiveness* which marks the conduct of artists upon most occasions has attended this: the evil so loudly complained of still remains as it was; no proposition, no attempt, no movement has been made to obtain a remedy. One or two *bullying* letters have been received, based upon a false notion of the evil, and imputing blame where there is none; but otherwise it appears as if the subject had obtained no consideration, excited no thought, nor been regarded as worthy of any exertion. Truly painters are a *strange* body, and there must be a peculiar sedative in the *smell* of oils and colours. We read of certain painters of ancient times who were found sitting quietly at work at their easels while their enemies were forcibly storming the walls and gates of their cities,—a circumstance more honourable to their love of art than patriotism; but it is still new in the world to witness a class of men prostrate under circumstances which would yield to exertion, who will make no effort to relieve themselves.

Do the painters still fear that, by making an attempt to procure an eligible place for the exhibition of their pictures, they would risk giving offence to the noble governors of the British Institution or the Royal Academy? If they have any such fear, they may quiet their alarms, and rest perfectly assured that both these institutions would rather become aiders and co-operators in a measure tending so evidently to the convenience of artists and of themselves, than oppose it: no sensible member of the profession or lover of art would oppose any thing which tends to its good. If the thing were undertaken in that spirit which, it is a misfortune to ac-

knowledge, has been found to enter similar projects, no friendly co-operation would be expected or deserved, and whatever might be attempted would, as a matter of course, fall to the ground: but if it were set about in the right way, assistance would flow in from all quarters, and honour and advantage would be the result.

It is surprising that no builder will speculate and raise an edifice in some suitable part of the town, which might be rented and appropriated as an exhibition room. Such a project would certainly succeed, if managed with the right spirit. The eyes of the public are more directed towards the objects of art than formerly; they are beginning to distinguish and judge for themselves, and are no longer blinded by the glare of names and authorities; so that there is every reason to believe, if any thing really good or promising in art, or feasible in project, could be offered, it would succeed.

#### QUERIES.

"Would it be possible and practicable to give the whole of the National Gallery to the Royal Academy, and to convert the British into the National Gallery?"

"Could WESTMINSTER HALL be appropriated every year to the exhibition of CARTOONS, and the proceeds applied for the encouragement of the higher branches of Art?"

"Would not this project, if carried into effect, afford a sure support and protection to high art, *independent* of the existence of any taste of a real or spurious character, either public or private?"

#### LETTER.

"Sir,

"The ready and kind attention I have received from you, a sincere desire to serve a good cause, and a wish to see engaged in it a man who more than any other is calculated to farther its interests, induce me to make this application.

"There exists an evil of a magnitude and extent of which nothing short of a long and laboured essay could convey an idea: this evil is the *insufficiency of space for the exhibition of pictures in the Galleries appropriated to that purpose*. The evil itself has sprung out of circumstances over which it was impossible to exercise any control. Twenty-five years ago, the *space* afforded at the Royal Academy and at the British Gallery was barely sufficient: in that period the number of artists has increased three-fold; so that, at the present time, full two thirds are precluded from the advantages of exhibition. In one season (the present) 1400 pictures are returned to their authors, not for want of *talent*, but for want of *space*; and full half that number received are hung in places in which they cannot be seen, which injures the reputation of those by whom they were sent. By this fact it appears that more than *two thousand* pictures are lost to the public as well as to the artists. I put the fact in this way because it is reported that Sir Robert Peel remarked on seeing the Cartoons at Westminster Hall, that he was greatly surprised so much talent existed in the country *unknown*. Whether such remark was made or not, the matter to which it relates might well have suggested the idea to an observant mind, while the fact itself affords an explanation of the evil in question. If all the circumstances be considered which are attendant upon the evil complained of, a case of wrong and injury will be made out, by which a certain class suffers what is without a parallel in society.

"Taking the number of pictures mentioned, and giving *three* to each artist engaged in their production, more than *six hundred* individuals are indicated. Thus it appears that the study, labour, and fair expectations of six hundred men are annually put in *jeopardy* by a cause which *might* be removed. But this is a trifle when compared with the real injury, the disappointment, the suffering, the wretchedness, and the absolute ruin that attend on a large portion of these. Artists in general are men of that temperament on which disappointment acts with peculiar effect; their pursuit is one which lies without the pale of vulgar sympathies and ordinary aid; but, at the same time that they are compelled to seek the common means of finding a market for what they produce, and on which they depend for an existence, they are deprived of the advantages which attach in ordinary cases to ordinary commodities. The question is not as to the value of the article produced, but as to the means of exposing it for sale, which, as a matter of course, should be fair and open to all.

"If there existed any tribunal competent to decide upon the merits of artists, which could select and put before the public the good works offered and reject the bad, a most essential service would be rendered to the interests of art. This is not the case, and it is an extra hardship upon artists that the public are led to believe *this is the case* in a certain sense, since all the pictures rejected and badly hung appear so served in accordance with their *demerits*, rather than with the demands of mere convenience. The Royal Academy can do no more than afford the space the locality itself will allow; and to do this to the fullest extent, the members themselves frequently send away their own productions, which, however honourable to the parties, mend the evil but little. The Gallery in Suffolk Street is entirely occupied by its members, while the British Gallery cannot afford one third of the space required.

"All that has hitherto been said relates to small cabinet pictures alone: it is utterly impossible to find space any where for large works, such as history and the higher departments of art suggest.

"Now the remedy for this evil is a plain, and, I believe, an easy one. The increase of exhibition-going people is in a ratio with the increase of artists and works of art, so that nothing more is necessary than to obtain the authority and the auspices under which every project of a public character and interest must appear, and the *support* necessary will follow as a matter of course, and the good which is sought for will attend the means taken to obtain it.

"So little indeed is wanted, that there is a difficulty in defining it. If Her Majesty would become the Patroness of an Institution for the farther advancement and protection of the Fine Arts, a dozen speculators would step forward, who would undertake the construction of a Gallery upon the advantages offered by the payment of an annual rent. Perhaps the *site* might be given by the government, to which certain privileges might be attached, but the less government is asked to do, the better.

"I beg you will believe, Sir Robert, that I have the fullest opportunities possible thoroughly to know the nature and bearings of the subject upon which I take the liberty to address you; and that, considering the high station you hold, both in the government and in public confidence, as well as the impression made by your good taste in art and certain acts by which your good feeling has been displayed, there is no person by whom the evil complained of could be so effectually checked, or the good desired promoted, as by yourself. As a measure of wisdom, patriotism, and humanity, no

subject can come more highly recommended; and although the proposal to see you engaged in it springs directly out of a private wish, the certainty of a public reward and lasting honour will attend your exertions. If a few minutes' conversation, in which more can be said than in a volume of writing, be desirable, your commands, at any moment convenient to yourself, will confer an honour and an obligation upon,

"Sir,

"Your most faithful and obedient Servant,

"E. V. RIPPINGILLE.

"July, 1843. 55. Berners Street."

#### ANSWER.

"Sir,

"Whitehall, July 8th, 1843.

"I am desired by Sir Robert Peel to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, and to express to you his regret that he is so much occupied by parliamentary and other public business that he is unable to make an appointment for seeing you, or to take the subject of your communication into consideration.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient Servant,

"E. V. RIPPINGILLE, Esq."

"G. ARBUTHNOT.

#### THE TUTOR.

WHOEVER feels for the first time his attention awakened and his sympathies stirred by the contemplation of a picture has found the clue to a new and rational enjoyment, and one which is capable of being cultivated to any extent, and made applicable to a host of useful and agreeable purposes. The study of art has a peculiar recommendation, as it offers, together with the allurements, the reward, and yielding to the one secures the other. It is certain that the pleasure we derive from a thing is very much in proportion to the knowledge we have of it; but it is a mistake to suppose that none but the proficient receive a remunerative degree of pleasure from their pursuit. It is probable that the beginner in art receives the same kind of pleasure as the accomplished artist, and as this is in proportion to the degree of knowledge possessed, it is as satisfactory and cheering in the one condition as the other. It is not in quality but in quantity that the cases differ; as to all, the end is equally distant. It is in the pursuit itself that the pleasure lies, and, whether the aspirant has advanced far or less far upon the road he is going, the gratification he feels is in proportion to the distance he has gone.

Whether employed in the contemplation or the practice of art the conditions are the same.

It is a beautiful provision in favour of art that no other motive than a real love of it is necessary to its cultivation; it is even a question whether genius itself is not included in the proposition; wherever

others appear they are an incumbrance and a check. The first step in the right direction, whether as regards the professor or the amateur, is a conviction that art is worthy of being studied for its own sake; and where this conviction is not felt the promise of good in either case is problematical. It is the pure love of art which forms the highest qualification of the painter, and the noblest attribute of the patron and the man of taste. It constitutes the link which binds and enables them to act together, and creates that mutual sympathy by the operation of which the best interests of art are affected.\*

The first impulse of a love of art should be immediately followed by an attempt to procure the necessary information. The shortest and most direct means is clearly a free and liberal intercourse with an intelligent artist, and a careful perusal of the best works extant on the subject of art. Unfortunately here lies the grand difficulty of the case. Artists are unaccustomed to communicate the instruction they alone are capable of affording, while the literature of art is so scanty and defective as to be almost useless to the uninitiated inquirer.

The philosophy and the principles of the arts of design have received very important attention from several intelligent writers; but their minds have taken too high a flight for the general reader, or their labours have been devoted to an elucidation of the subject, which is peculiarly applicable to the wants and purposes of the painter. All below these, even the younger classes of students in art, have been left unprovided for, except in their direct intercourse with their respective teachers; while, for the community at large, the practical lover of art, and the willing aspirant in taste, not even the shadow of assistance has been offered. The best and most useful works of a general character of information are those of the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Martin Archer Shee: his "Elements" and "Rhymes on Art" ought to be read by every body. Just preceding these come the works of Mr. Prince Hoare,—his "Inquiry into the State of Art in England," &c., and "The Epochs of Art." These are admirable works on the claims of the arts and the necessity of cultivating a taste for them. Earlier than these, again, are the works of Reynolds, Barry, Opie, Northcote, Fuseli, Flaxman, &c.; and very recently some elementary works have been published by Mr. Frank Howard, highly calculated to afford correct notions of art both in theory and practice. These are well adapted to direct the beginner in the first rudiments of practice, and ought to be put into the hands of all young persons.

It is of the first importance in any scheme of improvement which may be offered, to bear in mind that a singularly deficient system and means of instruction have been the cause of a lack of information on

\* The reader is requested to look for an essay on the subject of the connexion between the patron and the painter in a subsequent number.



the subject of art, which it is desirable to supply as speedily and as completely as possible; and could this fact be fully impressed upon the public mind no delay would take place in seeking a remedy for the evil.

There is one grand consideration in the study of art which gives it a peculiar character, and of which those who have the direction of young minds ought to be fully aware; it is this, art is *not* an appropriate study for the *child*; it belongs to a riper age, to a period of life at which the mind is sufficiently formed to be capable of receiving strong impressions, and of making observations and reflections upon what has been treasured in the memory. It is a mistake to suppose that great mechanical dexterity is necessary, and therefore that it is necessary, as in music and dancing, to begin early the cultivation of bones and muscles. The same hand which *can* write *could* draw. It is necessary to teach the mind to know and what it has learned to know: the eye is soon able to see, and the hand to execute; it is in their reciprocal action, one upon the other, that improvement comes, and is rapidly advanced, while being divested of the use of either defeats success. Very little indeed beyond the power of holding a pencil can be taught a child before it is capable of understanding and even reasoning upon its object. There have been, as is well known, no instances of precocious excellence in art, as have been the case in poetry, music, and even some branches of science. But many examples could be cited of men taking up the study of art at a very late period of life who became great proficient, and were in no way remarkable for any mechanical deficiency.\* I have known several instances of persons advanced in life taking to the study of art, and am perfectly certain that any intelligent person of any age which allows the free use of the faculties will acquire more knowledge of art practically (theoretically of course) in a few months than any child was ever found capable of acquiring or known to possess. Art is more properly the study of manhood than of childhood or early youth. On this account it is gratifying to know that the *gap* left in public information by a defective mode of education *might*, if the proper means were resorted to, be readily filled up, and it is the more to be regretted that the means are left untried. This is a very important matter to be known and reflected upon by those who may be induced to take up the study.

It has often surprised me that an affectionate and conscientious parent, whose solemn duty and whose earnest wish it is to study and adopt the best means of improvement in all that is useful and ornamental in the education of a child, should neglect the subject of art, and over it pass with an indifference that shows how little it is regarded or considered of importance. Looking at the results of an education upon the ordinary plan it is astonishing that they do not awaken a

\* Smith, one of the best engravers of the works of Gainsborough, was a baker originally, and did not begin the peculiar difficulties of his art until he was 40 years of age!

suspicion and a distrust in the means employed, and thus lead to the adoption of better. Dr. Johnson used to remark, "whatever is worth doing is worth doing well." Upon the force of this maxim alone the matter is worth attending to: but when it is considered that a knowledge of art is the basis of a good taste, to which an honourable distinction in society is attached, and, besides that, innumerable advantages are attendant upon it, both in a private and a popular sense, it assumes a character of serious importance, as a duty which all owe to themselves, to the community in which they live, and the world they inhabit. It is lamentable to see the heads of a family, with the young and tender branches of it around them, all susceptible of the right direction, and yet all wanting it. It is a sad reflection to an artist capable of thought to see in such circumstances the future patrons of his art, the future men and women of taste; to know from these he has to seek the meed of applause and the means of existence, and far worse still, that the interests of one of the noblest arts that tend to humanise man and adorn life are left at the mercy of those who, because they have not learned to know, cannot care for its advancement, or protect or advance its welfare. Even beyond this an unpleasant prospect is presented, for those he sees being reared in ignorance will be ripened in affectation: the affectation of a taste they must of necessity assume, in order to place themselves upon a level with those by whom they are surrounded. It is a phenomenon or an anomaly in the matter in question, considering the admitted *undefinable* character of taste, that people continue to act as if they were *certain* it was *intuitive*, and not *doubtful* whether it may not be an acquirement based upon education; and under the supposition or suspicion *that it may*, it is singular that no measures are taken to discover and employ the right means.

As has been said, it is the grand object of this work to disseminate artistical knowledge, and to give it in a plain and popular form, and particularly to supply a series of articles which shall form together a complete system of instruction adapted to the necessities of those desirous of becoming acquainted with the motives and the objects of the painter, the work he produces, and the means he employs.

In the next Number will be given the first lesson adapted to this specific purpose.

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## A FOUR YEARS' RESIDENCE IN ITALY.

HAVING passed the winter of 1837-8 at Rome; having seen most of the wonders of that wonderful city during those wonderful periods the ceremonies of Christmas, the Carnival, and the Holy Week; having seen the winter and the visitors depart, the spring begin, and the summer come, which brings that prettiest of all the ceremonies—the Corpus Domini, which nobody stays to see; and having been

chilled, and squeezeed, and parboiled, and roasted, twice blessed by the pope, and *accidentated*\* by his subjects, every day becoming hotter and unhealthier than the preceding, I thought it time to make a move. In this thought two somewhat weighty considerations were involved, namely, where should I go, and who should I seek as a companion. The first of these was not difficult, since all around teemed with novelty, and I never for a moment doubted finding a thousand objects of interest; but the second was not quite so easy or so certain in its results. No difficulties arose from my being a stranger at Rome, but the contrary; a very short residence in that grand republic of art was quite long enough to afford me, a painter, rather too large than too limited an acquaintance, ample in quantity rather than quality; and my getting away had a recommendation unusual in leave-taking — the pleasure of leaving my friends. At that period, however, I was green, and had a good deal to learn, which afterwards came to my knowledge, so that perhaps there were three persons in this *Gomorrhah* to whom it was *not* pleasant to say good-by; for on my first departure for Rome I never intended to return, although, as the sequel shows, I took as many leaves and returned as often as a lover does to his mistress before venturing on that distance which separates them the length of a street, and on that duration of time which keeps them apart till the next night.

Without thinking or caring much at that moment whether I should ever see Rome again, I had made up my mind to depart: this was August, and the sickly time came in with the next month. One great town also is always like another: it is in the provinces one must look

\* It is necessary to tell the reader something respecting this term, which literally means accident, but which has been wrested from its proper signification to the one it has acquired by being employed in such a manner as to excommunicate it from its place in the dictionary, and its use in common *parlance*. It has become the *hectic* of the *popolaccio* of Rome; wherever you go, whoever you hear speak, young or old, of the lower classes, whether you understand the language or not, this word and the tone in which it is spoken is sure to catch your attention: I first heard it in travelling from Florence to Rome. In ascending a hill where certain beggars were waiting, we were beset by the usual importunities. After a time they dropped off, but one old woman stuck to us most perseveringly, so much so indeed that we almost began to feel that she deserved something for the distance she had travelled, but no one had any thing to give. One of the passengers (Gibson, the sculptor) observed, "She'll have something for us soon: yes, we shall get an *accidente* presently." And sure enough the remark was scarcely uttered, before the old hag screamed out, "Pigliarte 'un accidente; tutte quante," which *benediction* was responded to by a general loud laugh. Then came the inquiry as to what an *accidente* meant, when it turned out that by the license and authority of the *Canaglia* of Rome it meant a *sudden death*! On becoming acquainted with Rome, the *only* part of Italy in which this word is in general use, I was surprised to find that the awful visitation of sudden death is more common there than in any other part of the country, or perhaps the whole world. Even in the personal character of the true Roman, the *Trastevereni*, there is a look of something choleric and apoplectic, while the peculiarly virulent fever of which Rome may be regarded as the head-quarters, and which attacks and kills in a few hours, may be considered as adding circumstances to natural tendency.

for the diversity of character, costume, and so on, and so I was resolved to go forth at once to seek them. I therefore set about making the necessary inquiries; and first I asked certain of those respectable people who had been a long time resident upon the spot, and who had got into circumstances which enabled them to make excursions wherever and whenever they pleased; but these respectable persons had hardly ever left their homes and studios, and knew or cared little for any thing, if the truth may be told, but making money by their profession. They had every now and then made a move for a few days to Albano, Frascati, or even Tivoli; and some landscape painters had penetrated as far as Subiaco and Arici, where they had made studies of the Brick fountain, now standing upon the spot where Ceres rested and sat down and wept, when searching "through the world" for her lost daughter, or painted the same rocks, or sat smoking for days together round the same tree which had stood for its portrait to the painters of all nations, who could have found infinitely better models at home, proofs of which are to be found in all the sketch-books of all the artists, and in all the pictures in which trees are introduced, and in all countries in which trees grow. There existed but one class of students, a pretty numerous one, out of which it was possible to find those who could give much information on the subject of localities and novelties in the way of study over which painters had been continually running. This class was the German students *located* at Rome. These young men have a passion for rambling, and not a sufficient acquaintance with that sedative money to care much about it. They live for nothing, want nothing, care for nothing, except tobacco and wine, herd together, and can go any where, so that there are few places even in the remotest and most out of the way parts which they have not visited. It was therefore determined to seek information among these plodders in paint and pedestrianism. After a little time a certain Herr Von Guzzlewien was found who agreed to collect the necessary facts, chalk out the route, make the arrangements, and become himself *compagnon du voyage*. A man whose *time* is his estate should never attempt to walk for cheapness when he can ride, so it was determined to hire some sort of vehicle, and some sort of horse to drag it, and to find some sort of a coachman to drive. This Herr Von Guzzlewien willingly undertook, upon the understanding that no part of the expense was to fall upon him, but that he was to be free of all tax, except that of his own keep. A bargain was speedily made with a person who had all sorts of vehicles to let, as well as horses, for twenty-eight scudi per month, about five pounds seventeen shillings and sixpence English. Some trials were made, and the machine with the moving and directing powers were pronounced to be perfect and ready. One fine morning, therefore; *ecco la caratina* at the door of my lodgings, and seated in it, with a broad, rosy, good-tempered face, smiling like a cherub, and with light hair flying upon his shoulders, as he himself remarked,

*comme un ange*, behold Il Signor Von Guzzlewien as *cochière* or coachee.

A painter's *traps* are soon got together, and the *luggage* of his companion, who was a kind of mongrel-artist, one third sculptor, another *formatore* or image maker, and another dealer in *vertu* — a compound kind of functionary very common at Rome, was stowed away in a blue cotton handkerchief, and after a *riverdirla* or two we took the course of the Quattro Fontane, and were speedily upon the road leading to Albano. As we came in sight of the splendid church of Maria Maggiore, St. John Laterano, and the Santa Scala, and issued out of the Porto Giovanni, and we met people who offered the *buon giorno*, and I looked, as I thought, for the last time upon that strongly-marked character and peculiar beauty which distinguish the Romans, I felt a certain sensation about my heart and a certain misgiving in my purpose of taking a final leave, which left it somewhat doubtful as to whether I should keep it or not. However, these feelings were soon overcome by the novelty and the charm of the country that broke upon us from across the Campagna. To the left the sterile mountains of the Sabine country, making one wonder how master Horace could have chosen such a spot for his farm; opposite, the beautifully-broken mountains of Frascati and Albano; and to the right, I forget what, no matter, but a very fine range of rocks and hills shelving off into the plains of the Campagna; and pushing away into the extreme distance the ancient Roman port of Fiumicino and Ostia, and leaving them where they always were, somewhere about the mouth of the Tiber. The stirring warmth of the bright sun, tempered by the fresh air of the mountains, produced a feeling of exhilaration I shall live long before I forget. Captain Basil Hall, in some work of his I have read, makes the road from Rome to Albano about fourteen miles, if I remember right, just the distance that it is necessary to make an invalid travel before he becomes convalescent. Judging from the change I felt in myself, I should have supposed half the extent was enough to set even a cripple upon his legs. Any and every brace of schoolboys that ever were let loose and allowed suddenly to emerge into liberty were utterly eclipsed in buoyancy of heart and spirits by my companion and myself. We laughed, we shouted, we sang, beat time to the quick step of the pony, who appeared to have caught the infection; and at last, finding the space in the little vehicle too limited for the expansion of our mirth, we both escaped into the road, and left our conveyance to follow as it liked. Our gambols were suddenly arrested by my companion complaining of a certain vacuity in the stomach; so jumping back again into the *caratina* he stood up for the purpose of taking an observation as to the bearings and distance of Albano, at which place it was decided we were to stop to breakfast. It was the first instance of a look approaching concern, and how thoroughly comic it appeared. "*Accidente!*" he exclaimed; "we shall never get there; there are full five miles yet; that's a good hour's

work." Whack goes the whip over the back of the little horse, who went off in a canter; while the driver broke into a laugh that lasted the whole distance, and did not cease when we got to the end of it.

On arriving at the foot of the acclivity it was necessary to dismount; and as we wound round and crept slowly up the beautiful height upon which Albano stands, my companion whistling to the horse, chanting to himself, and shouting to the broad blue sky over our heads, smacking the whip, and sometimes cutting away at the butterflies, grasshoppers of a finger's length, and the lizards of all colours, I was for the first time struck with the peculiar character, variety of form, and colour of the OLIVE. I had observed them in abundance at Florence, and in the neighbourhood of Rome, but I had not seen any like those which lined one side of the road leading to this pretty little city.

The peculiar character of the trees upon this spot consist in their extremely antique, grotesque, and fantastic character. Upon first sight of them the shape and look of their trunks suggest the idea of the human character. A number of strange forms of men appear before you, wearing long beards and garments cut in the fashion of other ages. Some stand in bending postures, or rest their arms upon staffs or other supports of an uncouth form; others recline upon stony or verdant couches, kneel upon the ground, or are grouped in pairs, their limbs oddly joined, and their position and *action* indicative of some sentiment. Sometimes you will see one standing in the midst of others, with the action of an orator making an harangue, one arm put forth and the other holding or hid in the drapery, while the hearers assume different characters of sentiment and expression. Then again you will see pairs of venerable people sitting upon the earth or upon green banks, deeply engaged in some matter, discussing warmly, or sedately, or whispering confidentially. The colour of these trunks very much assist the imagination, since patches of moss often contribute to give character, as it is seen upon the bare, naked grey of the formed and deformed masses.

There is a kind of supernatural look attending a grove of olives — a visionary uncertain something — occasioned by the skeleton-like and half-human shapes of the long, pendant, bare twigs, and the fantastically bent arms and branches; and this impression is very much strengthened by the quality of the colour, and the prevailing sobriety, and somewhat melancholy tone which prevails. The thick haze of leaves and twigs temper the brightest sunshine; and, while light is admitted, it is so broken, that no deep or abrupt shadows are seen or bright patches of light admitted. Every object is of a vague and indistinct character, lit by a mysterious kind of illumination — a grey mixture of light and darkness.

An olive wood must have suggested to Dante the idea of the souls imprisoned in the trunks and branches of the trees, who suffered and lamented when they were broken or touched.

It is said of this singular and prolific tree that a full crop once in ten years repays the farmer for all the care and pains that he bestows upon it, and that it will live a thousand years. It springs up spontaneously, and renews itself without attention or trouble, and is found in all the rocky elevations in the country, and even in the plains; although in the wide and open *pianura* of the Abruzzi it is no where to be met with. It gives a peculiar character to the country wherever it grows; its soft feathery foliage and its peculiar colour contrast strongly with every other verdant thing about it, and mixes in a graceful and harmonious manner with the forms and colours of the rock, the earth, and the vegetation generally. Nobody has painted the olive. Gasper Poussin, who lived in its tender shadow, was ungrateful to it, and never bestowed the attention upon it that its various beauties deserve. Nobody has represented it better, but he has not done it justice. In some aspects it is as dark as the cypress, in others it is a silvery plume; in some states a rich golden green, vivacious and effective; in others, a soft leafy shadow, or a cloud hovering over the side of the mountain, its form indefinite and its place unfixed. In itself it appears to know no change, is always green and flourishing, and ever laden with its fruit — some member or other of its family. You may strip it when you will, early or late, or if you leave its fruit to hang until it turns black as jet, which it does, it gives out a flavour of a new kind, makes the purest oil, or may be dried, and so kept for use. When it has stood out ages of productiveness, has become venerable, and shows symptoms of having been touched by time, it still suggests no notion of decay, for its freshness continues; and the vigorous shoots that spring up, and unite and add their strength to the parent stock, promise support and duration for ever. The old and the new are so assimilated and mixed in one character, that the changes of season are never seen to affect it. The young leaf of the coming year pushes gently off that of the past, while the new-born blossoms play, surround, and hang in tender companionship with the matured fruit. The soil appears to influence, in a most extraordinary manner, this singular tree; in some parts it grows to the height and magnitude of a large elm, in others it is stunted to a massy bush; in some specimens the trunk is bulky, and the branches knarled and thick with long pendant tresses of slender thin-leaved twigs; in others its character is a slender shrub, with stem and branches green, and yielding kindly to the softest breeze; but in every state it is abundantly prolific.

Some of these splendid examples of the olive are found on the side of the mountain upon which Albano rests, and which we were now ascending. I attempted to draw the attention of my companion to the playful, fantastic, grotesque, picturesque, and often beautiful shapes of these, but with no great success; he had "seen so many of them." I pointed out some trunks that looked like antediluvian remains, so tortured, twisted, split, and separated, grown into, and grown out of, and forming altogether such objects as might be considered

worthy of the attention of the curious; my friend showed no curiosity. I then tried to excite his interest by some specimens of an alliance between the vine and the olive, in which that insidious and sportive plant, with its bright green and luxuriant foliage had wound its sober neighbour in its close embrace, and might be seen smothering it in its caresses. Its rich ruby fruit lay lolling upon the arms and shoulders of its *inamorata*, and hanging in heavy festoons and tassels, upheld by the cordage of its own green shoots, and secured by the wiry tendrils that grasp and —

My companion wanted his breakfast, and remarked with some show of peevishness, that they did not make good wine at Albano; we must go to Marino Frascati, Rocca di Papa, Monte Compatri, or stop till we get to Velletri. "Sacré bleu," said he, "on ne trouve pas ici." I began to think by certain sensations I had about me, that I had bestowed too much attention upon these stupid old trees, which I could see every where, so I agreed with my companion it was actually necessary to get on a little faster; and in order to effect this, we turned to and pushed the *caratina* and the *cavalletto*, too, up the hill; and in a few minutes we found ourselves opposite the door of a *lacanda*, or inn, in Albano!

Here however they did not *give* in any sense a breakfast, at least such a one as is most agreeable to an English stomach, and one that has no notion of making a compromise between tea or coffee and any thing else. This was a difficulty easily got over, as a *café* was at hand, at which coffee, hot milk, bread, butter, eggs, and such things as a delicate stomach can take, were to be had at a moderate charge. Leaving the pony in the hands of my companion, who left him directly in the hands of somebody else, or nobody, just as it might happen, in order to provide for himself, I began to test the efficacy of the good things before me. My companion had gone to a wine house, at which he had found what he wanted. When I met him in the streets, he was glowing in aspect, as well as description of the feast he had had. I wish I could give the reader, not an account of the mode in which it was despatched, but the way in which it was described. Such a breakfast was never eaten before: such a *minestra*, *lesso*, *umido*, *rosto* (each *ticked* off upon the ends of his fingers); such quantities of *salarmi*, *polastro*, *presciutto ricotto*, *olio*, *aglio ed altri*, were never before disposed of. And then came an account of the wine, which spoke pretty plainly for itself. Before entering upon the eulogy of some he had found in a *fiascone* (large flask), and of which not a drop had been left even by way of sample, it was necessary to stop, look up, flourish an arm in the air, put on a look of solemn fun, and then to invoke a considerable number of the saints, some of the heathen gods and goddesses, and a few of what Dante calls the "*Cherubini Neri*;" nor was it possible to proceed without a constant appeal for their help in the three languages of German, French, and Italian; in short, no one human language could have been found equal to the task, nor could



any mortal, wanting so many sources of inspiration and relief, have done any thing like justice to the theme. I really began to feel ashamed of my own milk and water habits, and I would have given something to *blush*, in order to reflect the glow of my friend, and to look more impassionable. Whatever feat I might be disposed to attempt in the way of competition, I was necessarily compelled to put off till dinner time, at all events; and it was a vanity to boast until I knew what and who I had to contend with, so I hastened my companion to resume his place in the *caratina*; I took mine, and we departed. The weather was what I called gloriously warm, the *Herr* denounced it as hot as —, adumbrating that substantive with a number of strong and expressive adjectives, it was *fort chaud*, *brulant*, *caldo piu che caldo caldissimo*, insupportable. So off goes his coat and cravat, which action he accompanied with a very perfect imitation of the winds, as we see them represented in the clouds puffing away with distended cheeks. I was half disposed to suggest that the wine might *possibly* tend to inflame and add something to the heat of the sun; but I saw such a remark was directly opposed to the philosophy of my friend, who kept wishing we were near some *cantina* where wine was to be had, or that we might meet some *paesano*, so as to get a suck out of his *boraccio*, if he happened to have his wine-bag with him. No such good luck came in the way; so after half an hour's not very patient endurance, he began to find a solace in sleep. At first he nodded and woke himself up with a laugh, then a yawn followed, two or three drowsy exclamations, another yawn, another laugh; and then seeming to recollect all at once a *sufficient* reason for his drowsiness, that it was just the time of day at which he was accustomed to take his *siesta*, he laid back in the little carriage and went at once into a most comfortable and profound sleep. As soon as he was fairly gone off, which was the moment his head touched the side of the vehicle, the pony appeared to have taken a whim suddenly into his head, for, instead of going forward in the road, he tacked across, and began very quietly munching some green grass, and washing it down with some delicious water running by the margin.

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#### THE PROPAGATION OF FALSE REPORTS NOT WITHOUT ITS ADVANTAGES.

THERE is a certain female personage, an abstraction of every thing that is wonderful and vague, who is represented by those veracious commentators the painters as flying in the air dressed in flame-coloured drapery, the which is decorated all over with pictures of tongues, eyes, and ears, and to which emblems of the other two senses, and half a dozen more might have been added, if nature had been liberal enough to give so many, for they would all have been put into requisition. This same lady holds a long trumpet in her hand, which she blows with distended cheeks, and upon which instrument

she makes a great noise. She is the sister of a terrible giant, the daughter of *Terra*, and the last monster that issued from her fruitful womb. She had a temple at Athens, and has found votaries every where, and although her character is a very bad one, and the reports she propagates are made by the sound of trumpet, which of course is a *brazen* one, they are proverbially fallacious. It is astonishing, nevertheless, what degree of credence she commands, and with what eagerness men seek her acquaintance: her name is *FAME*. Amongst her dupes the editor is sorry to be obliged to enrol himself, and to say, with a great personage, Write me down a — : no matter. Common report, about whom there is a proverb involving a term too coarse for polite ears, is clearly identical with this same lady, except that she differs a little in her mode of blowing and blasting, and offers that in a *whisper* which the other gives with the full power of her lungs.

Lending an incautious ear to the delusive persuasions of this pander of the "Father of Lies," a great offence has been committed against nobody in fact except against a certain other lady, for whom most men outwardly profess a great respect, and for whom, for some reason or other, the poets have feigned or found a place at the bottom of a well, why, nobody knows, unless for the convenience of continually washing her robe, and thus keeping it white, as an emblem of purity: this lady's name is *TRUTH*. Some wrong has been done to this lady of the well through the *instrumentality* of her aerial enemy.

It was stated in the last Number of this work, when speaking of the inconveniences of the Royal Academy as an exhibition gallery, that when William the Fourth gave the key of that Institution to the worthy President, he remarked, "Sir Martin, I wished to offer you the key of a Royal Academy; I am sorry I can only present you with that of a dog-kennel." William the Fourth never said any such thing. As I had the honour of hearing this from the mouth of Sir Martin Archer Shee himself, it comes from the best authority, and the truth will now appear through the propagation of the falsehood, and thus an advantage will be gained. By way of contrition and retribution, I acknowledge one of the best-established maxims of worldly wisdom and experience, namely, that common report is not to be depended upon. I find from the same efficient and respectable source, that I owe the *amende honorable* to the *manes* and the memory of the architect of the Royal Academy, who, while labouring in his vocation in this world, and in the particular *job* in question, was beset by every possible annoyance and difficulty, cramped, and limited, and interfered with in every possible way. He was particularly put out by those two public institutions, the barracks and the workhouse, which many would think were better put out of town; not only was a passage through the building insisted upon, but even that those pepper-box ornaments should be placed upon the top of it. It was necessary to say this much, and is not desirable to say more on the subject, while to the architect may be said *requiescat in pace!*

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#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"A PAINTER," who writes in *Scotticisms*, although a facetious, is an intemperate fellow. Nothing whatever is to be gained by the method he recommends, and he must see that the spirit of this work is directly opposed to

the course he proposes : he does not appear to see clearly where the fault lies. It is not held good policy to attack abuses by abuse, that is the *abuse* of the right means. He must know that there are two modes of attack, where an object is to be carried ; the one is by storm, the other by sap. The former requires certain forces which it is not easy to muster, and without which it is impossible to make any thing like a respectable fight. Large bodies, both of men and animals, are not extremely sensitive : if a gnat stings a bullock, he gives a toss with his head, a switch with his tail, and goes on as if nothing had happened, and does not even condescend to remember the affront ; but if you speak civilly to him, and make overtures of having something to communicate worth his stopping for, you may possibly engage his attention, and whether he finds or feels the plea upon which his proud course has been stayed worthy of consideration, he will, perhaps, remember and *ruminate* upon it, and thus *something may* come of it. No, my facetious friend, it wo'n't do ; I know it for the best of all reasons, I have tried it !

The "PAINTER'S DREAM" has been received : thanks for the good wishes that attend it. It is fanciful enough, but it is defective in purpose, and it is also of too *abstract* a character, as connected with art. If the plain essays which have been attempted in this work *can* be considered above the comprehension of the general reader, what will be thought of the "Dream?" If the paralysing effect ascribed to night-mare had been given to that cold relentless apathy with which works of art, particularly those of the imagination, are commonly met, a moral end would have been indicated, and the catastrophe described would have been natural and pathetic.

Several communications must remain for the present unattended to ; that of "Matilda Y." we particularly regret.

E. L. E. has been long delayed, but never forgotten. The pretty little effusion offered to Spring, like its flowers, is doomed to appear out of season.

#### SPRING.

Come, bright and balmy Spring !  
 Smiling through showers,  
 All thy choice blessings bring,  
 Sunshine and flowers ;  
 Bid Flora deck the plain,  
 In gayest colours drest —  
 Birds sing their sweetest strain,  
 Flying their winter nest.  
 Sol ! shed thy brightest beams,  
 Hill, dale, and valley seek,  
 Quick'ning the limpid streams,  
 Kissing soft Beauty's cheek.  
 Health ! spread thy downy wing —  
 Mirth ! chant thy gayest strain,  
 To hail the lovely Spring  
 Back to our earth again !

1843.

E. L. E.

THE

# ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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## THE CARTOONS.

THE exhibition of the Cartoons is an interesting experiment, as it proves a very curious fact connected with the popular taste, and affords another agreeable exemplification that the lower orders are neither so debased in feeling nor in manners that they cannot be pleased but by a gaudy display of colour and gilding, or trusted where it is possible to do mischief. I remember well how charmed I was on entering the long gallery of the *Louvre* (it happened to be on a Sunday) in witnessing the gratification manifested by crowds of the "*Cannaille*," who were examining and enjoying the pictures. It was quite delightful to see parties of rude-looking men from the country listening with the most lively attention to some one better informed than themselves, who was engaged in explaining the subjects and the characters of the work of art before them. The old and the stiff-looking *militaire*, with a *file* of raw recruits at his heels, the steady sober citizen, with *madame et sa famille*, and perhaps *la servante*, all enjoying the treat together. Then the neatly-dressed *grisette* with her *beau* or *beaux*, the tall dark Norman woman with her ample cap, quizzed by knowing parties of the *muscadins de Paris*, gentlemen who could neglect their pea-green gloves, glossy ringlets, and starched collars, for the time, to gaze and exclaim at the *miracles* of David and Gerard. It was quite a pleasure to see the earnestness with which the beauties of the French school were relished and pointed out even to the children, to see the future *connoisseurs* of France, then in petticoats and leading strings, and the care of their *mammas* and *bonnes* who attended their tottering steps, and who put forth their hands, exclaiming, *Soyez sage ; touche pas, mon ami*. Little was it to be expected, when reflecting upon the odour in which the common people of England were then held by their betters, that in so short a time they would be so changed as to be admitted to a similar privilege! It is scarcely to be believed that the multitudes who visit the British Museum, the National Gallery, and the Cartoons at Westminster, can be the same people. I remember about eight years ago, being engaged in delivering a course of lectures on the arts of design at the Royal Institution at Liverpool, and having the pleasure of some intercourse with the then member for that city, Mr. Ewart, I took an occasion to

mention the idea of admitting the mechanics, and working classes generally, to the exhibition which was at that time open. It was naturally enough regarded as a measure of the most impracticable kind, although, as a matter of course, this gentleman thought favourably of it, and a proposal was immediately made to that effect by Mr. James Brancker. This proposal was not only met with decided opposition, but treated with the most marked disdain as a monstrous absurdity, all declaring that they would have their pictures away if any thing of the kind were attempted ! It is highly gratifying that the Cartoons have not only been respected by the crowds who visited them, but even relished and admired by them. It affords another proof, among the thousands that are daily offered to the observation of the painter, that simple, natural, and unpretending taste is a better guide to the comprehension of art than that "dangerous thing" a little learning. It would be absurd to say that this natural taste is all that is required for the real *connoisseur*, or for the objects and interests of the art, but it is undeniably the basis upon which pure feeling and real knowledge rest. Somebody has remarked that the grand obstacle to learning is that something is learnt which takes the place of it, a fact which is more fully verified in the article of picture knowledge than in any other kind of acquirement. It has often been said that ignorant people are the best judges of art, a proposition which will not stand the test of examination and trial, but which has nevertheless a sufficiency of truth in it to make it worthy of investigation. Those people who have no education at all, are in a better condition of taste than those whose education is a false and a bad one ; and in this alone lies the *morsel* of truth comprised in the proposition : whilst it is evident that the intelligent and the best instructed must of necessity be the best judges of art. We find three descriptions of *connoisseurs*, the simple, the sophisticated, and the learned ; and as extremes are said to meet, the first and the last are frequently found merging and amalgamating together, while the great mass which occupies the centre exerts an unceasing force to keep them asunder, and to appropriate the whole ground to itself. The space occupied by the sophisticated may be considered as a kind of desert over which the most resolute venturer can scarcely expect to pass by his own unaided exertions : he must have help. Alas, where is it to be found, and what part of the present system of education is competent to afford it ? This state of things is undeniable, and is at the same time severely censured by the admitted superiority of the criticisms of the ignorant. It is a singular kind of compliment which puts the crude, unformed, unguided notions of an uncultivated mind above the laboured and refined deductions of the learned, and it is almost singular that it has not led to a supposition that there *may* be something defective in that system of education upon which it is customary to rely for what is wanted, and upon which it is the practice to build up pretensions to taste and a knowledge of art. It would certainly have been a curious, and it might have turned out a useful experiment, if the opinions and feelings of the crowds of ignorant people who have visited the Hall could have been

collected and put together for use. Criticism might then have assumed an entirely new form, the art have been furnished with new principle, its dialectics with new forces, comprehensiveness, and novelty of phrases and expressions, and not be compelled, as at present, to turn to the old hackneyed vocabulary, whose terms have been employed in such a variety of significations, as at last to have no meaning at all. A little hand-book of criticisms for the million has been got up and sold at the door of the Hall, which looks like an emanation of *millionic* taste, and contains, with too much of the old leaven, some exceedingly acute and sensible remarks, as new in criticism as the works are new in art. It is *hopeful* to see something new thrown into the old current of critical slang and common-place: it breaks a little the dull surface of the cold inky mass which has so long flowed from the same source to the same end, fed only by the same tributary streams, their abundance only equalled by their utility and their purity. It is to be hoped that a fresh race of critics will spring from the crowds of the old Hall, as well as a regenerated mass of artists, as each for the first time have had occasion and scope for a *display* of their abilities.

Independent of the good which attends directly and remotely upon the efforts of the artists, the exhibition of the Cartoons may tend to awaken a suspicion in the minds of certain connoisseurs that the whole art of painting does not consist in the use of pigments, oils, and varnishes, and that there are merits which go beyond those of touch and texture. To the intelligent portion of the public, it may form a very useful lesson indeed, highly advantageous both to the interests of art and themselves: it will teach two things well worth knowing, namely, that the knowledge of the mere connoisseur, which consists in an acquaintance with the different hands of the masters, with their works, as it is erroneously called, and which demands a close and attentive study, very troublesome, and, for all general purposes, very useless, is not the knowledge absolutely necessary or desirable; in short, that is not the knowledge of art, but the knowledge of pictures. They will see that it is not the connoisseur who shades his eyes with his hand, peers through his closed fist, puts on a look of unfathomable sagacity, ejects certain sounds indicative of his wonder, his delight, and his penetration; prates in the jargon of his craft, at which the ignorant stare and the learned pity, raves of the excellences of the schools, *vapours* about styles, and luxuriates in the cabalistic mysteries of the palette, who is possessed of the necessary knowledge, since the Cartoons present none of the properties upon which he can exercise his acquirements: but a far more important lesson will be inculcated, and one of which the sensible part of the community will take advantage and acknowledge, namely, that the system of education in use, the one to which they themselves have been submitted, is utterly unequal to furnish that information which *is* required, and, consequently, that it will be necessary to look out for a better!

As was to be expected, some dissatisfaction upon the decision of the

judges in awarding the prizes to the artists engaged in the contest has been expressed. This will surprise nobody; but some animadversions have been made upon the second award, which extends the third order of prize to ten other candidates, not *quite* worthy of the source from whence these have come, and which have surprised many. The commission asserts, under the signatures of Lord Landsowne, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Samuel Rogers, Sir Richard Westmacott, R. A., Richard Cook, R. A., and William Etty, R. A., that the sum of money appropriated is not equal to the claims and merits of the competitors, in the following words, namely, after stating that a great portion of the works, 142 in number, are considered "highly creditable to the country," they continue: "The undersigned are the more desirous to express this opinion, *since the number of premiums offered, however liberal, is found to be by no means equal to the number of APPROVED productions.*" If words mean any thing, the sense of these is perfectly clear and intelligible. Every body understands this statement, and respects the intention with which it was put forth; and whatever difference of opinion exists as to the perfect correctness of the awards themselves, there is but one as to the perfect purity of purpose and unbiassed decision of the judges.

It is painful, under such circumstances, to quote from the "Art-Union" the following remarks upon the second award. "*In bestowing subsequent awards there can be no doubt other considerations than those of actual merit weighed with the judges.* Perhaps these considerations ought to have had weight; we cannot say: but we regret for the sake of the Royal Academy, that it was thought desirable to include two of its members in the NEW LIST; if they were not entitled to partake of the feast, they should not have been *made content* (!) with the scraps left at the banquet."

No man with his eyes open need look far to see that a great deal of the mischief done and attempted to be done in this mischievous world, is the result of sheer blundering rather than bad intention; so that this view of the matter, going directly as it does in the teeth of the assertion coming from the committee, can only be regarded as a mistake. These gentlemen may surely be believed upon their own declaration. They declare that they are "desirous to express an opinion that the number of premiums offered are found to be by no means equal to the number of *approved* productions;" or, to take up the figure employed in the paper in question, "that they cannot invite more guests to their feast, *because* there is not food enough." They make their assertion in a positive, and offer their excuses in a handsome, sincere, and respectful manner, and say in effect, "We esteem your merits, gentlemen; and although we have shown a preference, we wished still to have had your company." The Art-Union is pleased to regard all this as a mere excuse and an empty pretence, and make the Commission to say, "You are not fit to sit down with us, you ten worthless dogs, but here are some 'scraps left at the banquet:' we will make you 'content' with these, and 'we regret' that there are two members of the Royal Academy amongst you!"

## TO WHOM SHOULD THE PAINTER ADDRESS HIMSELF?

AN ESSAY BY W. B. SCOTT.

THERE is no remark more frequently made in the studios of our artists than this — that those who know nothing of art *practically*, are no judges of works of art.

How far this may be considered a true maxim, and how far it *ought* to be so, is a question which it is highly desirable to investigate; involving as it does a proper understanding of the rank which the art of painting ought to hold as an intellectual art, and as a means of influencing men and society through the common medium of the sympathies, and of nature. In truth, this inquiry would involve much that it behoves us all to know. It would cause the painter to pause before he labours, and ask himself what is his aim and end in his profession, as well as in the particular picture he may have before him; and it would set the public right on many points of criticism, and in their expectations and requirements.

Refinement, in every thing, more or less, sets aside the primary *meaning* which caused the erection or animated the growth of institutions or of arts, and in its place elevates the power which was originally called forth only as a servitor and an instrument. Thus the garment which was appropriated for comfort becomes only distinguished by fashion — uncomfortably enough perhaps: thus wholesomeness gives place to delicacy; and thus, in politics, a national constitution may in the lapse of time be lauded for its admirable fixity, when it ought to be a working engine. The image which a purely religious feeling may have carved for a type, becomes in a short time an idol. The allegory invented by the investigating reason to shadow out the truth, becomes an accredited theology. The means become the end. And it is in this state of things that the question, whether or not the *practically* ignorant of art are fit judges of its works, arises at all. It is a question between the authority of the schools, and the authority of nature. Of the technical part of any work the uninitiated are doubtless ignorant, and therefore unable to speak; this is the professor's privilege. The difference between a great poet and a little one is, not that his verses are more perfect, but that his ideas are more vital. The dramatic interest, the truthfulness, the sentiment, have no technicalities: the education that fits us to appreciate these, is the education of life. The sympathies are the judges in such matters; and an emotion or an idea ought to be conveyed by a picture, so that all would appreciate it. The painter has not the privilege of speaking, and thus elucidating his own meaning, as the author or even the actor has, and thus he is less easily understood; but this only shows his art to be the more difficult. The genius of every art is different, and the means of each are different, but the object of all is nearly the same.

There are then two critics of a picture — a landscape for instance: he who understands the mysteries of colour, tone, effect, composition — Turner, Stanfield, and the English school of landscape on the one hand; and on the other, he who is conversant with harvest and seed-time, whose footsteps have been among shady lanes, or by the stream as it talks to itself, half hidden, or as it flows slowly through the level pasture with its rows of elms and clusters of ancient cottages. The one considers the picture as a work of art, and by rules; the other, as a representation of nature, by its simi-



larity to the living original. Doubtless this last must be a man who has a sense of beauty and a heart: he must not be one of whom it could ever be said —

“A primrose by the river's brim,  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.”

Such a biped is no man at all, and has nothing to do with art, or with matters intellectual; and yet such a one *could* be the former of the two critics we have described; at least he could take a secondary place among them. Indeed, his deficiency might serve him in good stead; he would look with a singleness of eye for the concatenation of pleasing colours, the blending of tones, the concentrating of shadows, and all the other elements which the painter has to command *and to apply*.

Or take for instance a historical picture. The critic acquainted with the *technique* passes verdict by a consideration of the building up of the composition; the variety, harmony, unity of the lines and colours, the texture, chiaro-scuro, draperies, and all the other difficult components of this grapplest and most difficult labour of art. The other critic looks, as a man, for the adequate expression of passion and power in the high struggle of the historic field; and, as a historian, for the *vraisemblance* of the scene in costume and character, that he may be able to feel and say, “So they lived and acted then, our forefathers, yet our brothers.” Is there any comparison between the two? “Hyperion to a Satyr” we will not say, for both are good, and the first is the more educated man; but we must say that the last critic's congratulatory squeeze of the hand would be a requital for years of study, and his admiration the truest evidence of greatness.

So far the question is a clear one. Few will impugn the justness of these remarks. But then it is necessary in all great works that both species of excellence should be found. They should unite in making the picture a work to afford pleasure and instruction equally; and equally also to the *cognoscenti*, and to men of natural taste and research generally. Whenever the origin of the work has been a dash of effect or of colour rather than a design or an idea, and the feeling of this suggestive sketch is kept up at the expense of the subject engrafted upon it, this double excellence, it is clear, cannot be attained. Wherever the pleasure arising from the manner and knowledge of *the artist* is the most predominant feeling inspired by his picture, he must be contented with the limited audience; because those who admire must be learned in a like manner with himself, and appreciate the dexterity and perfection of his studies. They must both be in the same mental state; only, the position of the one is to work, and the other to criticise. The painter must do nothing which is against the canons by which both are squared. His art can enforce nothing to the million, except as an underplot, and thus it becomes little more than a decorative act.

On the contrary, when the production has originated in a strong impulse to communicate some beautiful idea, or to portray character, without mastery over the medium through which he works, the result must be a failure. The effort will be abortive, because he is unable to convey his meaning. Not only must we convey our meaning in its fulness, but, to do our art justice, we must convey it with beauty and ease; for the first law of all art, as of all poetry, is, that whatever we describe must communicate pleasure by the description. In the most suffering agony of tragedy on the stage — in the depiction on the canvas of the most dread moment of death (as in

many of the old masters)—in the spasm of lunacy (as in the Transfiguration) — the sympathies must be attracted, and the picture remain grateful to the mind. This it is, indeed, which elevates the poet, and distinguishes the man of genius above all others. He is not merely an instructor, but whatever he inculcates steals into the souls of his audience and becomes a motive, without ever having been in the repulsive form of dogma or information. He does not teach by showing the how and the why, through a mere logical process, which the mind of the disciple may or may not be in a state to receive; but he gives us the *result* of knowledge, informing, as it were, the atmosphere we breathe, addressing us, not as cogitative beings alone, but as living men. This makes it imperative on him to master his medium; but when he has done so, let him use it. By no means let him stop in the enjoyment of his own facility, and forget that imitative art must have soul as well as surface, and that the last is only great as it indicates the first; that nature is full of vitality and intention, although every living thing, as well as every picture, must express itself through form and feature. The greatest men in art which the world has yet seen have not been very great in the execution. The Roman painters are not the most perfect in the use of their pigments, in *chiaro-scuro*, or even in the refinements of composition. Such attributes would, in their pictures, weaken the unity of the work, and restrain the idea. The mind which carries the executive furthest must be a partial mind, peculiar rather than expansive. Those who came first in the field were compelled by necessity to address the uninitiated, and to take the widest and most permanent foundation for their greatness. Art in their hands exerted its highest privilege: elevation of form and character was the divine power which their works possessed over the minds of men. We, however, follow after many schools, and authorities thicken on all matters of art. In this country the plastic arts have been familiarised to us but of late. The great work of civilisation went on without them, popularly speaking, and it continues without them in a greater measure than in the other leading nations of Europe. A contemporary critic in the "Spectator" goes the length of saying — "Men judge of paintings like critics who should decide on the respective merits of Milton, Pope, Shakspeare, or Gay, by the neatness of the manuscript."

This is too much; but may there not be *some* truth in it, especially among those who complain that the public cannot judge? Whatever is truly great, must not be a work of the hand addressed to the eye alone: it must speak from the heart to the heart.

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### THE TUTOR.

THE first step in judging of what is produced by the painter is to ascertain what has been his aim: in looking at what is done, it is indispensable to know what he intended to do. If this be considered in the case of any particular artist, it will naturally lead to the contemplation of what has been done by the whole mass, past and present, and thus a study will be offered which calls for very close scrutiny, extensive investigation, and, at last, for the exercise of an industry and intelligence of no ordinary character. To know what art is capable of doing, it is necessary to be informed of what it has already achieved.

It is quite true that a great extension of knowledge can belong alone to

the accomplished artist and man of taste, and that the practical and critical part may be entered upon without any such profound information. But the sooner the mind of the student is opened to the importance of such information the better, and the more eager, rapid, and secure will be his success. It will be an advantage to read of what has been achieved in art, even when it cannot be seen; but of course such accounts ought to come from right sources, and not such as are filled with the wonder-exciting absurdities with which the ancient writers, and some moderns, abound. These, as a matter of course, will do mischief, as they will perplex and raise expectations which can never be realised.

AN rational accounts of pictures will relate in some way to their qualities, and this will give the inquirer an idea of the nature and properties of graphic representation and resources. The degree of success which attends the painter in any of his manifold experiments will constitute an after-study, and require some thought and much observation; but it is to be observed that these qualifications will be obtained, aided, and facilitated in a degree by the practice of the hand and the eye, and in a way of which the non-operative student can form no notion.

The shortest and securest mode of gaining a knowledge of art is by combining and aiding observation by experiment; and as an excitement of an indispensable character, it is necessary never to lose sight of a fact, which has been but little attended to, namely, that the practical part of art cannot proceed far without being aided by the critical: the mind must know, or the hand cannot advance.

The philosophy of the pictorial art is decidedly that part of the study which is the most essential and important, but which has been most of all neglected: without some broad, general, and comprehensive notions of the nature and properties of art, its subordinate branches and details, because derived and dependent upon no principles, appear to tend to no end.

Let us regard a picture but as the fixed and permanent image of an object, and its applicability to a number of useful and agreeable purposes will be readily felt and acknowledged. The choice of objects for the ends of art will immediately determine their importance, and their claim to attention and respect. Their character and kind will also determine and form a scale of the difficulties involved in their representation.

If we proceed, in this way, to examine the productions of art, we shall soon obtain a clue to the just estimation of the objects chosen, and the means employed by the painter to produce them; and we shall thus rise from the lowest and most familiar agents employed by the painter to the noblest and most exalted.

Without such a clue, all attempts to comprehend art must be uncertain, perhaps futile.

Let us begin our investigation with simple imitative art, that is to say, with a picture which gives the bare image of an object, and represents it much the same way that a looking-glass pictures the object it reflects. If we think of a picture as a kind of mirror which reflects objects, we shall have a very useful guide to many of the technical mysteries of art, and a test which may be very advantageously employed upon many occasions and in many inquiries.

Let the student detach from his mind all idea — all he has ever heard or read of colour, *chiaro-scuro*, keeping, effect, tone, and other of the *cabala* of picture connoissance,—and he will be in a condition far more favourable to the just comprehension of the subject than many a practitioner deeply

versed in the profoundest learning of the schools. If this course be pursued, the inquirer will be hereafter struck with the easy explanation afforded of several important difficulties in the subject before us, and, perhaps, wonder that so much learned nonsense should ever have been employed, when an easy solution was at hand.

It will be seen clearly that Sir Joshua Reynolds was perfectly correct in his remark, that the mysteries of art are more easily entered into by the natural and unsophisticated inquirer than by the half-learned pretender.

Painters view nature as they are accustomed to represent her, and represent her as they learn to see her. It is therefore indispensable, to judge of the truth of representation, to learn to use, as it were, the eyes of the painter. A picture affords an infallible proof of the impression received by the artist, by whose skill such impressions are but reflected upon the canvas. As pictures convey pleasure to the mind and feelings of those who view them, in the same degree has nature, in the objects given, afforded an extra degree of pleasure to the painter, over and above what she affords to the common spectator.

The objects represented by the painter are manifold; and it is by their character, the mode in which they are represented, the choice made of them, and the effect produced by them, that art, and the operator engaged in its service, are to be judged. In all cases a picture is to be considered as the true image or reflection of the painter's impressions, and of your own. If what is offered to your notice on the canvas before you exceeds your own impressions, in that degree he has gone beyond you; if, on the other hand, such offering fall short of what you have felt and remember, and give you but an imperfect reflection of what you have treasured in your memory — in your head, or your heart, or the mere records of your eye — then, and in that case, you have advanced before him.

Considered in this way, a picture assumes, not the mere character of a representation of objects as they are seen by the eye, but an embodied view of some portion of the endless stock of treasures which have been gathered by the perceptions and sympathies, and secured and made available by thought and reflection. A picture is not only capable of giving a representation of the materials collected under the purveyance of the mind, but of the deductions made by the use of them.

The principles and attributes of art often rest upon some metaphysical phenomena but imperfectly understood, and are never referred to as offering an explanation of any difficult point of speculation or inquiry. This is not the place to enter upon the subject; but it is quite clear that the images of the mind are closely connected with a judgment in art; in fact, that they are the tests to which all pictorial representation is addressed, in cases where the presence of the object does not offer a direct comparison; and their perfection or imperfection becomes, as a matter of course, a very important consideration, whilst, at the same time, no attempts are made to fit them for their various offices and purposes. However, this matter will not be overlooked in some future portion of this work. For the present, it is earnestly wished that the inquirer should reflect upon the view here offered of a subject upon which a little reflection will inevitably throw some light, and prepare for future and farther investigation.

## EDUCATION IN ART.

I AM asked by an unknown correspondent, who makes some very sensible remarks upon the subject, to give my views of the best mode, in the present condition of things, for obtaining that information in art which I state to be so much wanting, and which I consider as the only foundation upon which a real knowledge of the merits of art and a true relish for its productions, or, in other words, a *good taste*, can be reared. He is kind enough to assure me that I have awakened in him, by the remarks I have made, a perfect sense of the utter inefficiency of the system adopted in the present day, and regrets that his own education in art has been so defective, and wishes me to point out in what manner he should treat his children, namely, a boy of fifteen years old, and two others of seven and nine. If he will refer to the last No. of this work he will find, under the head "The Tutor," some remarks applicable to the case. A fact is there stated, the reasoning and the deductions from which are the result of some thought and many years' observation and experience. If the judgment upon this be correct, it will appear that it is never too late to begin the study of art for a person who has the free and full use of his faculties; but that it is utterly useless to begin it too early. I have always reflected upon this as a circumstance favourable in more than one way; first, because the time, as it is now employed in the drawing-school, is, according to my notions, quite thrown away, and might be devoted to some other necessary branch of study with advantage to the pupil; and again, that the gap left in the education of the community by the adoption of a faulty system *may* be supplied at any time that the proper means shall be adopted.

There is certainly a difficulty in recommending the best means, even where the peculiar character of cases is fully ascertained; but to take the one in question. I should say leave the younger branches of the family entirely to themselves. I do not say that I would not assist a child of seven or nine years of age, or even younger, if the child showed any peculiar liking or talent for drawing. I would certainly help such a one, but I would not force him to be helped. I should in any case almost consider it but as another instance of what I have frequently witnessed — an inclination or an aptitude for employing the pencil without the power of proceeding beyond a certain stage of advancement, until the mind should be matured to a certain extent, and rendered capable of reasoning, reflecting, and making deductions for itself. I know many instances of children displaying great readiness of hand and eye in the delineation of objects, and doing such things as one would be disposed to regard as the offspring of real genius; but in no instance do I remember that any future and commensurate excellence followed. It is natural to suppose that no attempt was made to keep up the spirit of what was so well begun: this is true in most cases; but the same stimulus was afforded and

continued which gave interest and excitement to earlier efforts, but without any good results. It would militate against my own reasoning, as well as the convictions of my experience, to say that these children could not have been taught to advance beyond the point at which they arrived by their own efforts, because I am quite satisfied that any intelligent person, under the directions of a judicious guide, might advance, and be taught to effect, by the aid of a little patience, attention, and *liking*, much more, as I have said, than any child was ever known to be capable of learning or doing. All I mean to imply is, that the capacity of a child is not equal to any important achievement in art, even where there is evidence of more than the ordinary talent.

The boy of fifteen, whom my correspondent states to be a youth of ordinary faculties, the usual acquirements, and of no decided bias or taste, I would treat in this way. I would first put into his hands the best general history of the art that can be found. There are two or three small works, one by a Mr. Fletcher, and another without a name, "A History of Painting in England," which are readily found. Then there is Lady Callcott's work on the history of Early Greek Art; and to these might be added Pilkington's "Dictionary of the Painters," or any other work which notices the lives and works of artists. These would make known that such men as Raphael and Rubens once lived, and convey some idea of the kind of operations in which they were engaged, as well as a faint notion of what were the results of their labours. As has been said, book instruction in the elements, principles, and practice of the art is exceedingly deficient; but some reading from the works named in the last Number might prove useful. I must here confess that I am utterly at a loss to point out a ready mode of obtaining that information which is necessary for a tolerable comprehension of the merits of art, or for making any important advance in taste. I have no hesitation in asserting *what it is* that is wanted; but how it is to be obtained it is difficult indeed to point out.

The thing, however, has been clearly indicated in some remarks already made. The great increase of artists, and the apparent facility with which they are created, is a full and complete illustration that the means are *somewhere* to be found by which a knowledge of the principles of art sufficient for its exercise, if not in a very high degree of excellence, at least in a respectable manner, may be acquired. It cannot be said that these means, supposing them to be generally accessible, would be found equal to the *highest* demands of art, criticism, or taste; but it is clear that, *could* their influence be extended to the community at large, the number of amateurs and men of taste would be immensely increased and improved, the race of critics regenerated, and the great mass, who are now utterly ignorant and regardless of art, might be reclaimed, and brought to respect at least, if not to understand, the interests of art and the claims of taste.

To explain what these means are, it is only necessary to look to our

head school of art, the Royal Academy, and reflect upon the course which is there pursued, and which is productive of the results spoken of. Young men are in this institution put under the guidance of competent persons, a line of study is pointed out to them, the best examples of art are put before them, and the best precepts are addressed to their minds. In less time than many a boy at a drawing-school gives up to his drawing-master, these young men become respectable or accomplished artists, while the boy leaves his teacher as ignorant as he went to him, and, perhaps, from having imbibed false notions, less capable of understanding or enjoying art than if he had had no teacher at all. On becoming a man he finds or fancies it too late to improve, and, however much he may feel his deficiencies, he thinks it better to *assume* a knowledge he cannot possess, than make an effort to obtain what he wants: and it must be acknowledged that it is not surprising he should do this, since the right means are so difficult of access.

It will certainly appear to give but little assistance in the difficulty, to point out the Royal Academy as affording the only competent means! It is not the intention of these remarks to do so, but to refer to it for the purpose only of an illustration of what is possible and practicable. It may be remarked that the functionaries here are the highest order of teachers in the country, and the facilities afforded the greatest, and that it is utterly impossible and unnecessary to give the youth of England generally these advantages.

This is not to be denied; but the objections, and the difficulties too, are rather seeming than real. The Royal Academy could not undertake to instruct the community in a knowledge of art and the principles of taste, but other institutions might be formed, in which the plan pursued in the Academy might be adopted; and this, no doubt, would speedily take place, were the first step necessary to their erection taken, namely, a conviction of their importance and their use!

It may be observed that all the artists made in the kingdom are not formed at the Royal Academy; this is true, but they are created by similar means.

My correspondent, and others who may be interested in the matter before us, will see that I am on the horns of a dilemma as to the thing asked of me. I have indicated clearly the kind of means necessary to employ; how they are to be obtained is a matter of much difficulty, and will be considered in a future essay.

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### INSTITUTE OF THE FINE ARTS.

ON the 5th of August the Society held their first occasional conversazione at Willis's magnificent rooms in King Street, St. James's, which was numerously attended by the members of the body, some artists of distinction, and a few of the friends and admirers of art. A

number of pictures and drawings were sent by members, and a variety of rare and curious matters connected with art, and, more or less, the objects of taste.

Mr. Wyse, under whose friendly auspices the Society may be said to have been formed, presided, and delivered from the chair an address, which went to explain the objects of the Society, and to recommend it to the attention and support of artists in particular, and men of taste in general. After which the following paper, written by Mr. Ripplingille (one of the members), was read by the Secretary, and the business of the meeting closed.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES AND CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH  
FAVOUR AND OPPOSE THE PROGRESS OF ART.

*"Al gusto l' arte, all' arte il gusto serve."*

As the world progresses with slow and languid step towards that remote, or imaginary end, where perfection dwells, many subjects of interest, speculation, and inquiry, present themselves: some are so simple in their nature and influence, that they are readily understood; whilst others appear anomalous and incomprehensible.

Whether we lack the necessary facts upon which to ground our reasoning, or whether we take up the inquiry with our minds pre-occupied and biassed, it is certain that we often miss the path that leads to a satisfactory conclusion, and return from the attempt repulsed, humiliated, and sometimes but little the wiser for the labour and pains we have bestowed.

Such themes or subjects, for example, as genius, taste, beauty, and some others, as matters of human speculation and inquiry, appear much in the condition of fixed stars, that, whether viewed from the spot on which we stand, or from latitudes thousands of miles nearer their bright abodes, present to our observation but the same appearance still.

Without going to such lofty examples, let us take one comparatively simple, the examination and illustration of which will nevertheless furnish a task at once beset with difficulties and replete with interest.

On what does the advancement of art depend? In entering upon this inquiry it is to be observed, there are many circumstances peculiarly in our favour, as we have been, and are still, the living witnesses of a new era in the history of art. We are enabled to judge, not from accounts given us, but from personal observation, by what set of circumstances art (such as it is at the present hour) has been, and continues to be, surrounded. However limited may have been the sphere of our observation, however little we may have been interested or occupied in its affairs, we can scarcely have failed to notice, in some degree, the influences which have been brought to bear upon it, and the effect, in some way or other, produced by them. The subject lies open before us free and unencumbered by any difficulties but those which are naturally and properly its own. We are furnished with every fact we can desire. To the history and tradition



of other times we can add the knowledge of what has transpired in our own ; and to the opinions and reasoning of the past, we can associate the experience and the results of the present.

If we turn to the historic accounts of art, in its rise, progress, and decline, we shall find the whole subject involved in difficulties, many of which originate in the impossibility of knowing the true and entire condition of other times as we know that of our own. Both history and tradition are full of marvellous stories, well calculated to mislead and embarrass, particularly as regards minor circumstances. Art is said to have exerted and been affected by certain influences unknown to us ; and both its patrons and professors have been presented to us in that guise only in which we see things at a distance.

But before we proceed, let us take a glance at those great and governing events, which, as far as art is concerned, may be said rather to constitute its fate than its history, and let us bear in mind that *these* afford us by far the surest guide ; in fact, history furnishes but little else which can be entirely relied upon. Minor and subordinate occurrences *may* be true, these *must*.

A variety of conjectures have been put forth as to what state of things most favour or oppose the progress of the arts. If it be said that a time of peace and security is necessary to their nourishment and support, it may be answered, that during these times they have sunk to the lowest ebb, and in times the very opposite of these have risen to the highest elevation. Thus, if we go back to the age of Augustus, we shall find that those great men who immortalised themselves and their age were formed during a time of public strife and commotion. The moral causes apparently did not conspire to raise the arts and sciences, but to depress them : those who by their abilities raised themselves to any degree of eminence were only the more exposed to the horrible proscriptions of the times when Cicero himself died the victim of his abilities. At the battle of Actium Virgil was forty years old. If we come to the age of Leo X., in which painting particularly flourished, we shall again find how little it was assisted by moral causes. During the space of thirty-four years Italy was trampled under foot by barbarous nations. The kingdom of Naples was conquered four or five times by different princes, and the state of Milan underwent more frequent revolutions. The Venetians saw several times their enemies from their turrets, and Florence was almost constantly at war, either with the family of the Medici, or with the inhabitants of Lara. Rome more than once beheld hostile troops within its walls, and this capital of polite arts was plundered by the army of Charles V. with as much barbarity as if it had been stormed by the Turks ; and yet it was actually during these thirty-four years that the arts and sciences made that progress in Italy which is considered in our days as a prodigy. The suddenness of its rise is not less wonderful than the surprising height to which it rose in so short a time, for in 1480 painting was but a rude and imperfect art, and yet towards the close of the fifteenth century, from walking with an almost imperceptible pace, it advanced all of a sudden with gigantic

strides. Rome, Venice, Florence, and the other cities of Italy, experienced this prodigy; men sprung up there as it were from under ground, who immortalised their memories by their skill, and became superior to their masters. Neither had they predecessors to imitate. Much the same wonderful event happened in France: during a period the most unfavourable to all appearance, the arts and sciences made a great and sudden progress. In thirty years the Drama made a greater advance than it had done for the three preceding centuries; painting rose with the same rapidity, and to a degree of excellence which has been thought worthy by *that* nation of being deemed an epoch in art. The notion of their flourishing only in free countries is absurd, and is fully contradicted by a reference to the ages of Leo X. and Louis XIV. Thus we see that the great and leading events here mentioned had no apparent tendency to favour the advance of the arts; but it is to be observed and reflected upon, that these mentioned were only one set of them, and that it is possible another of a minor and less imposing character might have co-existed, which as much cherished and stimulated as these are apparently calculated to ruin and destroy. I shall now adduce some instances the very opposite of these, in which it will appear that the circumstances they contain to all appearance strongly conspired to uphold and further the best interests of the arts, and yet they languished and sunk under them. Greece, from the death of Alexander to its subjugation by the Romans, was exposed to none of those calamitous wars which are capable of throwing the arts into confusion. They did not revive in the age of Augustus. After the battle of Actium Greece enjoyed for three hundred years its serenest days, yet during these happy days the arts were in a visible decay. If we examine the period of Augustus we shall find that learning and the arts began to decline amidst all that has apparently a tendency to uphold them. They degenerated in the most glorious days of the Roman empire. As for the civil wars which were so much talked of in history, the scenes of the greatest part of them were out of Italy, and finished in two campaigns. They did not disturb forty years out of three hundred which are computed from the time of Augustus to Gallienus, but the arts declined under magnificent emperors, who cultivated them themselves. Nero, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, and Alexander Severus, knew how to paint; and it cannot be supposed that the arts were disregarded by them. In fine, in the four centuries which elapsed from the time of Julius Cæsar to the inundation of the barbarians, there were successively several peaceful reigns, which may be considered as a real and historical golden age. Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius, who succeeded one another immediately, were all great and good princes, and their contiguous reigns compose almost an entire century. But the arts were sunk, and few eminent men appeared in that age. After the age of Leo X. every thing seemed to conspire to preserve the arts and sciences. The seventeenth century was a time of rest and plenty for Italy, even to its last year. It was during that time that the Venetians amassed immense treasures, that Sixtus Quintus put five millions into the

apostolic treasury, and that the several other sovereigns all heaped up riches. None of the cities of Italy were ransacked, but all was peace and plenty; nevertheless, it was during this period that the arts fell into decay.

From the period of the decline of art in Italy, to the time of Sir Joshua Reynolds, — from that memorable epoch when the names of such men as Rubens and Vandyke could only be mentioned in a whisper by the side of those of Lely, Kneller, and Hudson, the great and leading events of the world were by no means *unfavourable* to the progress of art. It was during the early portion of this measure of time, that our neighbours, the Dutch and Flemings, made enormous strides in art, which the present day very justly regard with wonder and admiration: circumstances appear to have been as much in our favour as in theirs, and yet this country did nothing.

Referring to the grand events of a subsequent period, which embraces our own time, appearances are decidedly opposed to the welfare and advance of art; and yet, during this brief interval, the dawn of a new era of art has arisen upon the long night that preceded it.

The events of this period are too well known to need particular mention, but the fact is worthy of observation, since history can scarcely furnish a parallel instance in which the energies of a whole country were absorbed by one subject, and drawn aside from what have been called “the arts of peace,” to the exercise and the contemplation of war and universal strife.

To pursue the inquiry still farther upon the same principle, let us look at another grand fact, the influence of which, one would think, must necessarily affect the prosperity and progress of art.

This country has been loudly and repeatedly denounced as utterly deficient in Taste. No other has been instanced as eminently gifted in this rare quality; but as *this* has been marked for its inferiority, the inference is natural, that others are superior to it.

The policy of this country as regards the encouragement of art has ever been a subject of reprobation and comment. Every other civilised nation has lent its aid to art and the efforts of artists, whilst we, in a national way, have done nothing. Our Royal Academy, as it is called, has the sanction of the nation only in the person of the sovereign, whilst its members, and the rest of the profession, are sustained by private patronage.

Young aspirants for the honours of art are sent forth in shoals, patronised and pensioned, from other nations, to seek and avail themselves of such advantages, in the way of study, as their own countries cannot furnish; their works are bought, and placed in situations calculated to obtain them honours and rewards. Nothing of the sort is attempted amongst us, if we except that once in *nine years* the pupil who obtains a gold medal at the Royal Academy is sent to Rome to study.

No country was so deficient as this in examples of art until very lately; and even now it is immeasurably behind some others, both in

the possession of fine and efficient examples, and in the facility of obtaining access to them. Until within the last twenty years whatever riches in the way of art this country might possess, their inaccessibility rendered them almost entirely useless.

Art in England, therefore, has ever been deficient in all that is generally considered essential to its cultivation, its welfare, its advancement, and even to its very existence. Who, then, shall explain how it is that art has been sustained, still lives, and holds as proud a place (to claim no more for it) as any in the nations of the living world?

In returning to the inquiry, of what it is upon which the welfare and advance of art depends, we cannot remain insensible to the fact—whatever may be the real cause—that its prosperity and decay are independent of such great events as have passed in review before us. We are, therefore, the better prepared to pursue the investigation, and to look with a clearer eye and keener scrutiny into the evidence and proofs which circumstances of a minor and subordinate description may afford us.

In looking back from results to causes, when the former are important, we are naturally disposed to give a consequence to the latter which is not their due, and which we should not have bestowed had we looked forward from them to the effects they were likely to produce. Thus, when a country or a people have been distinguished for their advance and perfection in art—when their progress has been so rapid, their example so striking, their excellence and their fame so extensive as to appear a kind of miracle, we cannot believe that any thing so great and noble could possibly have sprung out of causes and circumstances which are not great and noble in themselves, and such as we should upon the first view pronounce to be capable of leading directly to such important ends. With this impression upon our minds, we are very likely to overlook minor considerations, unpretending and perhaps unpromising circumstances. If it be not peace nor war, nor other great moral cause, which influence and direct the genius of artists, then it *must*, of necessity, be national and public patronage: private and individual is supposed incapable of effecting such grand results. To this *must* be added an immense store of the finest examples of ancient art: a school must be formed, also, from which must emanate laws and ordinances, to serve as guides both in thinking and in practice; and this again must be attended by a tribunal of criticism, dispensing rewards and punishment. Nothing short of this will suffice; all, and more, is imperatively called for and demanded. This satisfies all inquiry until it is seen that art has several times risen to great excellence and perfection without such assistance; and it has frequently sunk where all this has been most liberally supplied! If we look to what is doing in the present day, we shall see that this, which has been declared essential and indispensable for the welfare and advance of art, has been adopted and done by all the nations around us: England alone has left it undone!

If we look at the results we shall find that other nations have achieved no more than has been fully equalled by us.

When Reynolds commenced his career, art was opposed by every possible obstacle that could be thrown in its way: the fame of the mighty had passed away, and that of the feeble and insignificant had taken its place. All the world knows that about this period a few of the better spirits rallied; united their forces; and having made good their claims to a settlement, after wandering on the earth like paupers without a home, a resting place was found, and "a local habitation and a name" were assigned them.\* Having had thus much conceded to them, the artists manifested a desire to show their gratitude, and to prove their skill in a profession then new to the country. With this view they made a proposition to ornament some public and national buildings with examples of their prowess: they offered their labours gratuitously, but their offers were rejected.†

At this chilly period, an aspirant for public honours and fame sprung up, whose name ought ever to be dear to every artist and lover of art—it was BARRY. Undeterred by the repulse which his brothers and himself had so lately met with, he commenced his great work at the rooms of the Adelphi Society,—the subject of which, for grandeur and comprehensiveness of conception, stands alone. Let us view poor Barry, circumstanced as he was, beginning this great and laborious work, without means, without friends, and without the stimulus of sympathy or encouragement. These are difficulties great enough in themselves, to say nothing of those of the subject of his work; yet under these, which all can judge of, and under those which genius peculiarly knows, and ambitious dreads from defeat, which but few can understand, we see him cheerfully and ardently labouring on, toiling through the day, and employing the night to make some little picture sketch or etching to raise the means of subsisting for the next, with the certainty in his mind that if this means failed his work must stop. Many of these little alms-imploping productions are still extant, without a name, or a notion attached to them that upon these the life of a devoted man of genius once hung; that the very

\* When Sir Joshua Reynolds, at the head of a body of artists, attempted to lay a plan for an academy, it was treated with such ridicule that caricatures and satirical prints were published in order to bring the measure into contempt. An exhibition also was got up by the sign-painters of the time, intending to mock and ridicule that of the artists; an account of which, with a list of the *works* of the exhibitors, may be found in a periodical of that day, called the "Universal Magazine."

The great Dr. Johnson, in a letter to a friend, notices the two or three exhibitions which the artists, in spite of all obstacles, had been enabled to get up in this way:—"We have lately had an exhibition of pictures amongst us: what poor creatures are we, that we are obliged to resort to such a means to kill time—that precious time which will never return!"

† When the proposal of the artists was made known to the then Bishop of London, Dr. Terriak, his reply was, "I will never suffer the doors of the metropolitan church to be opened for the introduction of Popery into it;" and Dr. Newton, Dean of St. Paul's and Bishop of Bristol, who left directions in his will for having a monument erected in St. Paul's, was actually refused a place, and it was in consequence erected in St. Bride's church.

bread which sustained life was dependant upon them ; that they were executed when famine and death stood waiting the event—in the gloom and chill of loneliness, in the cold that pinched the body, and the neglect that wrung the heart—with eyes worn with toil, limbs wearied with exertion, spirits exhausted, and feelings tortured by alternate hopes, fears, and disappointments. Let it be remembered, too, that this trial lasted for seven years, and that it scarcely ever extorted a complaint ; that patience and hope remained when almost all that sweetens and supports life had fled ; that exertion increased as the probability of reward grew less ; and when the certainty of that bitterest of all curses came,—time and endeavour wasted, motive misunderstood, and merit overlooked,—even that could not annihilate the perseverance nor quench the fire of that spirit which had all along lighted up the enterprise ; for we find poor Barry, after the exhibition of his work, which had produced for his seven years' labour about 500*l.*, begging to be allowed to retouch some parts that he considered faulty, and urging it by the plea of his yet having some of the paint left which would be sufficient for the purpose.

The struggle thus nobly begun by the fathers of British art was continued and upheld, with that sort of spirit and perseverance which warm hearts and steady principles never fail to bestow : the consequence was that public attention was excited, and the good feeling and natural liking for art common to all ranks and classes, and which had so long lain dormant and untouched, was roused into life and stimulated into activity.

After a little time, many who had till then looked upon art with coldness and indifference began to warm in its favour,—to listen, to learn, and at last to busy and bestir themselves in its affairs ; and some who had no perception or relish for its productions found still they had sympathies for the men struggling in its cause ; and thus an alliance was formed which became the ground-work of its establishment, and the guarantee of its prosperity. It is to this alliance which the progress and success of art are to be attributed.

From that period to the present, art, and that good feeling to *which we may give the name of PATRONAGE*, have gone hand in hand. At first, like new-made friends, they had each other's dispositions and purposes to learn ; but as their acquaintance grew, this knowledge came, and with it their sympathies increased, their thoughts assimilated, their views expanded, their hopes brightened ; and as their capabilities to aid each other became more and more apparent, their hearts united inseparably in a mutual, warm, and steady attachment.

It must of necessity be a difficult task to convey a clear idea of the mode in which mutual influences operate upon each other, even when the matter they act upon is of a character well understood and defined ; but the subtle agency here employed and here operating, not in a simple, but in a duplex way,—being received and reflected, reflected and received,—forms a subject of inquiry highly complicated and almost impenetrable while yet to the mind and perceptions of the inquirer

many parts and particulars lie open, and afford a good clue to the investigation of the whole.

A union of forces is productive of strength; and it appears easy to perceive that the sort of alliance here spoken of, made up as it is of mutual sympathies, the interchange of intelligence, and a species of inter-tuition, cannot have failed to be productive of great and mutual benefits; *although this alliance has never been looked to as illustrative of the grand fact before us*, nor from its unassuming character has it been thought capable of affording the solution of a question of such difficulty.

Few men in any pursuit are strong enough to go great lengths by their own unaided efforts, and where they appear to do so the secret of their success is hidden, perhaps even from themselves. Men catch the air, gestures, manners, and sometimes the habits of thinking and feeling, from those with whom they associate; and even more than these, since they not unfrequently learn to know and to feel, by what they see manifested in others, that they themselves are in the possession of faculties they never discovered or suspected.

There is no class of aspirants for fame who need the assistance that this sort of alliance is capable of lending so much as the painter. From temperament alone he falls readily within the sphere of its influence, and he has commonly deficiencies which render it peculiarly necessary and advantageous to him: the possession of genius will always be uncertain, and will of course often fall to the lot of those who are deficient in education and the means of acquiring that extensive and varied stock of information which is necessary and indispensable.

Possessed of the true feeling and fitness, the painter finds his devotion for art to stand in the way of his acquirements; one object alone takes entire possession of him, and leaves him little time or susceptibility for others; his ever-employed energies hurry him on to early excellence, and he steps forth conspicuously into a sphere in which he needs every possible aid to strengthen his natural powers, and to sustain his acquired position.

In this tottering condition, patronage (as we have called it) comes to assist him, and that alliance is formed on which it is presumed the advancement and perfection of art has ever relied.

It may be said that men in all pursuits are in a similar situation with the painter. It is indisputably true that information, advice, and perhaps inspiration, may be borrowed and caught by all, but nevertheless the painter's is a peculiar, and in many respects an entirely unparalleled condition, in as much that, in order to assist him, the peculiar objects of his art must be comprehended and felt. To understand his productions, it is necessary to know what he intended to produce; to estimate what is achieved, it is necessary to know something of the capabilities essential to the achievement; in order to feel the influence of what is done, it is requisite to participate in the spirit and feeling in which it was conceived—it is necessary to enter into

his perceptions, to comprehend his motives and his means—to begin with him, to keep pace with him, and to go to the extent of his conclusions; to look with his perceptions, to feel with his sensations, and to think with his thoughts. It is not every man therefore who is calculated to become an ally to the painter; the number will ever be comparatively small, but society will continue to confer a proud distinction on those possessed of the requisite qualifications.

In other professions a mode of education is resorted to which is exclusive and immediately applicable to the demands of the occasion; in art there is nothing of the sort, at least, there is but little which can be taught in the ordinary way, so that most artists are their own teachers; and Reynolds has remarked that few are taught to any purpose who are not. The peculiarity of the painter's art is, that all the objects of his study lie open to common observation, and in their ordinary character are known to all. This is more the case in painting than in poetry and music, arts that assimilate closer than any others. The objects of poetry are rendered by the instrumentality of words and thoughts addressed to our understanding; while music, which demands the study of the science, is founded upon the acoustics of nature, and is addressed to our sensibilities—perhaps to a receptive, innate, and involuntary faculty within us, for which we have no name. Painting appeals to the perceptions, and to that stock of images stored in the memory, which is called the imagination. It differs from the learned professions, which are exclusive, and demand a course of appropriate study: it deals with the exterior of objects, and employs the appearances they put on and present to all. The painter's art, as well as his excellences, consist in rendering them in all their various beauties and effects, and in using them in the illustration of his thoughts and intentions. No other of the arts opens its stores and resources so liberally, and offers so warm an invitation and so easy an ingress to its mysteries. It is this peculiarity in its nature and character which first allured those who were not actually employed in its service to adopt the pursuit of what is now called TASTE; and from hence, perhaps, first sprung the term itself, now applied so variously, so that *he who first learnt to think and feel in the mode of the painter, first exercised the faculty of TASTE.*

It would not be at all difficult to give instances of the specific operation of the united influence here spoken of, tending obviously to the advance of art, and to particularise circumstances and persons, who have felt and been benefitted by it.

It is greatly to undervalue patronage, to regard it only as a source from whence the painter draws the means of existence. Leonardo da Vinci dying in the arms of Francis the First indicates something more than the cold relations of buyer and seller. Similar examples might be multiplied, and carried through a series of ages, down to our own times; and the circumstances which have elicited demonstrations highly honourable both to patronage and art, attendant on the loss the world and the profession have sustained in the deaths of Wilkie and



Chantrey. If we look to men who have stood forward in the world distinguished for their taste and knowledge, whether this is to be considered as the direct cause or not, they were those who did not disdain to hold a free and liberal intercourse with its professors.

In order to comprehend clearly any subject of inquiry, it is necessary to free it from all that does not properly belong to it, and thus to view it standing by itself. It is not intended to undervalue public patronage, but to show that, taken abstractedly, it is insufficient for the grand and various ends of art, and therefore unworthy of the great consideration which many are disposed to assign to it. The grand defect of public patronage is, that it wants the *sympathies* which peculiarly characterises private.

As an illustration of this proposition, it may fearlessly be asserted, that had all the pictures which have been sold within the last fifty years been transferred to the buyer by some method by which he should have taken the picture and deposited the price, without intercourse or connection with the artist, Art would now be in the same condition that it was fifty years ago.

As to the influence of public honours and rewards, there can be no doubt but that these act as a spur upon the painter's powers, throw him upon his own exertions and resources, and force him to dive deep into his own capabilities, for the purpose of extracting the best and choicest portions of his stock; but, at the same time, this haughty patronage fails to afford him the warmth and nourishment which are to be derived from private: it excites and drains his powers, without adding any thing to sustain and strengthen them.

In summing up what has been said, it is clearly apparent that it is *not* to those great events which have been adduced from history we must look for the solution of the question. On what causes and circumstances do the advancement and the decline of art depend? In viewing what has been achieved by other nations, and comparing it with what has been effected in our own, there is reason to believe that it is not to *public*, but to *private* patronage, that art owes its real success. To understand and to comprise in one phrase the essence of all the influence, power, and good, by which Art has been, is at the present hour, and ever will be sustained, it is only necessary to consider it as the connection between the painter and the patron, and to name it thence the *Mutual Faculty*.

It is the object of this essay to prove, that it is to this alliance we are indebted for the greatest benefits Art has ever received, and *not* to public patronage *abstractedly*. Public patronage is considered but as the *open* demonstration of what has already been effected in private—it is but the same agent stepping forth from the studio, the home and the hearth of the painter, to show itself abroad.

It is this *mutual faculty*, as we have called it, which has raised Art to its loftiest elevation, which sustains and keeps it alive, and which *will*, whenever superior influences are brought together, lift it to the highest pitch of excellence it is ever destined to attain.

# ESSAY ON THE HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS OF SPENSER, IN THE POEM OF THE FAËRY QUEEN.\*

BY FRANK HOWARD.

As the character of Prince Arthur is enriched with the achievements of the British power as a state, so the reign of Gloriana is enriched with events which took place prior to the accession of Elizabeth; and in the first book, the legend of Holiness, is given an allegorical history of the Reformation. Una is the one thing needful, — truth or true religion, and she comes to the court of Gloriana, to seek assistance, as the reformers sought the assistance of Elizabeth; there is also probably in this an allusion to the early rise of the Reformation in England. St. George is described as

“ Sprung from ancient race,  
Of Saxon kings. . . . .  
From thence a Faëry thee unweeting reft,  
There as thou slepst in tender swaddling band,  
And her base elfin brood there for thee left :”

alluding, though with a slight perversion of the fact, to the early introduction of Christianity into England, and the change which occurred under the Saxon kings, when Augustine introduced the Roman Catholic doctrines. His adventures in Error's den appear to be an allusion to the rise of the Pelagian heresy in the fourth century. Archimago is the Pope, who, with Duessa, the Roman Catholic doctrine, separate him from true religion, and betray him into the hands of Orgoglio, figurative of the persecution under Mary, from which he is delivered by Prince Arthur, in reality by the power of England on the accession of Elizabeth.

Una, when separated from St. George, the representative of England — an allusion to the restoration of Popery by Mary — is protected by the Lion, the emblem of the Netherlands, who “mars blind devotion's mart” in the destruction of Kirkrapine, the support of Abessa and Corceca, allusions to the ritual of the Roman Catholics. The Belgic Lion is destroyed by the Sarazin Sansloy;

“ Proud Sansfoy,  
The eldest of three brethren; all three bred  
Of one bad sire, whose youngest is Sansjoy,  
And twixt them both was born the bloody bold Sansloy :

an allusion to the oppression of the Netherlands by Spain, whose Moorish connection is figured under the designation of “Sarazin;” the character of the Spanish people in the description and names of the brothers, proud, melancholy, and bloodthirsty; and a triple character, also alluded to in the triple body of Gerioneo, the oppressor of Belgè, in the fifth book, which has reference to the three countries united into one empire, under Charles V. and Philip his son — Spain, Germany, and America.

Una is first protected from Sansloy by the Satyrs, which may probably be an allusion to the reformed faith being held up by what Spenser elsewhere calls the “brutish multitude;” and subsequently by Satyrane.

\* Errata in the former Essay, — For “Elizabeth's sister, Queen Mary of Scotland,” read “Elizabeth's sister queen.” For “Carberry hill,” and “Carberry,” read Langside, a mis correction of the press, arising from over-anxiety in the haste of correcting the proof, and a distrust of the memory of the author as opposed to the only authority at hand which mentioned the name of the battle, Miss Aikin's Elizabeth.

"A Satyr's son yborn in forest wild,  
 By strange adventure as it did betide,  
 And there begotten of a lady mild,  
 Fayre Thyamis, the daughter of Labryde:"

alluding to Sir John Perrot, who was supposed to be a natural son of Henry VIII., and who, while deputy of Ireland, appears to have protected the Protestants there.

(To be continued.)

### A FOUR YEARS' RESIDENCE IN ITALY.

As my two companions, the horse and the driver, were so comfortably provided for, I began to think what I should do for myself, whether I should take a nap, or take a sketch, or take myself off—that is, whether I should walk on and leave my companions to follow at their leisure. There was no great chance of an accident, if even I left the little horse with the *caratina* at his heels. I knew Italian horses quite well enough to feel secure, that if it should come to a question in the animal's mind whether he ought to go on or stand still, travel or remain where he was, that the decision would fall most decidedly upon the latter; but again it struck me that if by any possible contingency he should determine upon making a movement at all, it might be in the wrong direction, and that as he showed so little disposition to *go forward*, he might take it into his head to turn back and go to Rome again. As this was just what I did not intend to do, I mounted the little vehicle and began using the same sort of *argument* I had seen my friend employ to persuade him to go the way I wished. The little horse appeared insensible for some time to the reasons I offered or to the mode in which I urged them, but at last, as if convinced that he ought to do something, the rather, it appeared, from some inward conviction he felt, perhaps from the grass and water he had taken, than from any outward impression made upon him, he began slowly to proceed upon his journey, hanging his head, swinging it from side to side, and looking sulky. We continued to travel at a sleepy pace, zigzagging the road for four or five miles, when it struck me that a continuation daily for one month of the same sort of exercise would try the patience, the nerves, and the muscles of any body, and demand that my friend should do for himself what he had often done for the antiques he sold in his shop to the *cognoscenti* of all nations,—that is, provide a new arm for the occasion. I was exceedingly glad I had not undertaken the task of driving such an animal, and some compassion for him who had induced me to continue the use of the whip, disturbing the *slumbers* of the horse, and not interfering with those of my companion. As the beautiful scenery on the left of the road broke upon my sight, and I stood up to catch glimpses of the blue Mediterranean on the right, and stretched my neck to gape and to gaze all around me, I found the little vehicle two or three times so near certain inequalities in the road, that another step

might have thrown the whole a little out of its usual position. My companion had fallen back into the *caratina*, and lay in so profound a sleep that nothing short of an earthquake or an upset could possibly have awakened him; indeed, after one or two ineffectual attempts to effect that object, I began to contemplate turning him over, as the only means of rousing him.

We continued to jog on in a similar manner for, perhaps, an hour longer, when a circumstance arose which demanded that I should make another attempt to disturb the not *over-quiet* repose of my friend. We had arrived at a spot offering the choice of two roads, and, as I knew well that my organ of locality was not much to be depended upon, I was a little puzzled which to take. There was nobody to ask, and as for putting the matter to the horse (a matter which succeeds upon some occasions), that was altogether useless, for, if he were left to choose, it was quite clear he would take neither the one nor the other. Nothing, therefore, was to be done but to wake the sleeper: but how was that to be effected?

Whilst I stood debating this question, and making abortive attempts upon more than one of the senses of my companion, and was on the point of giving myself up to despair, or the chance of going right or wrong as it might happen, the elements, apparently out of compassion for my forlorn condition, began all at once to get together a kind of consultation of clouds that lay idly scattered along in the line of the sea, to knit their brows into a grave considerative look, and presently to show clearly a disposition to weep in showers. Those who have seen and felt it rain in a mountainous country have been witnesses to the literal exemplification of the old proverb, "that it can't rain but it must pour." Sure enough it does come down with a vengeance, and without warning, quite in the style of a cascade; and so it did upon the present occasion. Before I could turn myself round for my mackintosh, the *caratina* was half full of water, and my companion lay soaking in an element for which he had no respect, and which certainly showed no respect for him. Of course, I *assisted* at the ceremony of bringing him to consciousness, glad to have the aid of so powerful an auxiliary; and our united efforts were soon crowned with success. My companion awoke rather suddenly with water in his eyes, water in his mouth (where it very seldom entered), in his bosom, and, in short, in and upon every part of his whole body. He awoke with an *accidente!* of course, and a few other expletives; but his getting up was not quite so readily performed as his waking, for his legs hung over the seat in front of the vehicle, while his body lay much lower in the centre and the bottom of it, so that it cost him several efforts to extricate himself and to stand upon his feet. While this was doing, I had got my cloak round my shoulders, and had liberated a large umbrella, which had been fastened on behind with many yards of rope, and tied in a sufficient number of knots to have tired the patience of Job, or blunted the sword of Alexander himself. I was trying hard to fix it in the place contrived for it, where it was

intended to serve the double purpose of a defence against both the sun and the rain, and just as I had accomplished this my soaking was complete, and the rain over. It was but a few minutes, however, before it commenced again: my companion and myself secured ourselves as well as we could under the shelter it afforded; but we found it so inefficient that we determined to look out for a better. There were very few trees in this part of the road; but over to the left, with some high and distant mountains for a background, there stood, surrounded by a vineyard, a kind of farm-house or *casino*, in which we might possibly find, what we then stood in need of, a dry reception. It was a good half hour before we could find any opening that looked like an entrance, but presently we came to the mouth of a dreary-looking lane, narrow and dirty; and the next minute we descried an arch, upon which the house was built, and up the sides of which ran a flight of steps, and under which we might find shelter. Over this arch ran the long single room of which such buildings are commonly composed, while the space below was occupied as a stable and cellars, which were filled with wine casks and wine-making apparatus. This arch was just the thing: it was large enough to allow us to drive in our vehicle, and give us all protection; and the moment my companion saw it he set up a shout of delight, and a laugh followed it, which, to my seeming, displayed more joy than the occasion called for. "*Per Bacco*," he exclaimed, "just the thing;" and giving the little horse the whip, he accompanied each movement with a word of encouragement, such as "*lesto! lesto! passa via! vagabondo brutto va! birbonaccio, lesto! va via! eugh!*" We drove in out of the storm, which was now thickening, just as my companion was executing a laugh of apparently great satisfaction, and I was surprised to hear it cease all at once; and looking into his round, flushed, good-tempered face, I observed a most sudden and extraordinary change in it, and an expression that I did not at all comprehend. Casting my eyes towards the cellar, I saw nothing but empty casks, and a look of desolation, as if the place were unoccupied and disused. For the moment I thought that disappointment attendant upon some vain expectations formed for obtaining aid from the jolly deity whose name had been invoked was the cause; but there was a look of dismay and discomfort which even this did not account for. What could it be? At this moment I caught sight of five or six labourer-like looking men, who, like ourselves, had taken refuge from the storm. I saw my companion eye these people with a look of great disquietude, nor did he appear to greet them in the usual free and cheerful tone. The men themselves looked rather blank, stood huddled together, and spoke in a low tone. As in Italy, and in every other part of the world that I am acquainted with, except England, men never meet together, at home or abroad, without speaking to each other, and most commonly entering into conversation together—a practice that tends much to civilise and inform the lower orders—it would have appeared very singular not to have addressed these people in the usual way. My

*buon giorno* was immediately ready, and my companion, who spoke Italian much better than myself, entered into talk with one of the countrymen. But I observed it wanted all the freedom and ease of his usual address. What in the name of wonder, thought I to myself, can be the matter? and with this I took a turn or two backwards and forwards in the space farther into the cellar. When I got to the end of it, my companion came up to me humming an air, but in a very lugubrious tone. When he came close to me, he whispered, "Don't speak to me in French." Then with his hands behind him, he took a turn back again, still humming the same air. Having made a *giro* of three yards, he returned again, and again whispered, "Speak the best Italian you can, and not much of it." "*Va bene*," said I, loud enough to be heard by the whole party.

I now began to reflect that there must be a reason for all this. My companion knew the country and the people much better than I did, and he was evidently not at all satisfied with this specimen of them. What could these men be? They could not be robbers—highwaymen—banditti! I almost started at my own suggestion, and half wished they might. They showed no signs of belonging to that picturesque, gallant, and romantic brotherhood about which one has heard and read so much! There was nothing of a *professional* character about them: there was nothing wild enough in their looks even for respectable *amatori* in that line. However, I resolved now to go and have a good look at them: where were my pistols? I had a brace of small ones *somewhere*, but where they were, and loaded or otherwise, I could not tell: no matter, let's have a squint at these robbers, whose very looks had already robbed my companion of his mirth and the ruddy glow of his cherub face. On approaching the spot where they had stood, appearances were altered, and I must say in a mode not much in favour of either party. Two of the men stood whispering together behind one of the brick piers that supported the arch; presently one of these men came and beckoned away another, when I took a turn back in order to see what was going on: I observed them speaking *sotto voce* to each other. I now began to think that my companion had more cause for alarm than I at first suspected, and to regret that we had neither of us any means of defence, should any outrage be attempted. "*Ma*," as the Italians say, "*come si fa*," what's to be done? "*chi sa*," who knows? a beautiful and laconic bit of philosophy well adapted to all occasions, and particularly applicable in the present. Having consoled and satisfied myself with this very conclusive argument, I thought I might venture, without betraying either my *tongue* or my throat, to address one of these not very good-looking *gentlemen*; so, putting on the bravest look I could assume, I stepped up to him who looked most accessible, and asked him if he thought the rain would soon cease: he lifted his shoulders to his ears and exclaimed, "*eh! chi lo sa?*" who knows it.

This did not appear to be over-civil, although, as I discovered afterwards, nothing impertinent was meant, and that it is the usual mode

of answering a question ; for I found, upon a thousand after-occasions, that an Italian never will give a direct reply if he can help it : you may question him for an hour, and every time get an evasive answer. However, in my then ignorance of Italian character, I took this reply as no good omen, and I did not venture on another inquiry. I turned to my companion, and asked him if we should go, looking at the countrymen to see how they relished parting with us ; but I saw no change. My German friend held the back of his hand out to the weather, pretending that he did not know, without this test, whether it rained or not, although at that moment a black cloud was sending down its favours in torrents. "*Mache!*" he observed with much satisfaction, "*non ce male*" (not so bad), while the man I had spoken to, and who stood leaning with his shoulder against the wall, his jacket thrown across his chest, and his dark scowling eye looking downwards, growled out, as if thinking aloud, "*piove un deluvio*" (it rains a deluge). Fearing to expose my Italian and myself to another rebuff, I made no remark, but I must confess I felt rather uncomfortable. I had already looked narrowly, to see if any weapons were on the persons of these men, but I saw nothing ; but turning towards a corner, in which a surly-looking dog lay upon some hay, and who had never moved from the time we entered, there stood two rusty-looking guns, their locks covered with a piece of leather. Oh ho, thought I to myself, worse and worse ; "*come si fa?*" we must take our chance at all events, but we shall see ; these fellows may be very simple, harmless rascals ; after all, perhaps they are only sportsmen. Having consoled myself with this reflection, I turned towards my companion, whose face of dismay made a laugh on my own quite irresistible ; and thinking that to put a good face upon the matter would not injure our cause, I gave way to as much mirth as I could muster. My companion was immovable, appeared to think it very ill-timed, and taking a furtive glance around him, he whispered to me, "*non mi piace quei genti ; andiamo!*" (I don't like these people ; let us go). I must say I did not like them myself, neither did I like to go out, for it still rained in tolerable earnest ; but yet to get wet was better than getting murdered or robbed, so, making some excuses as to the necessity of reaching Arici at a certain time, we got the pony out, hid ourselves under the umbrella, and departed, giving our *addios* to the *gentlemen* who had so much disturbed our quiet, and who returned our salute in no very friendly tone.

My companion continued to look back over his shoulder for a minute or two, but when we felt ourselves sufficiently remote, he began to congratulate himself and me, that we had escaped without damage. As I was getting wet, and a little out of temper too, if the truth be told, I could not assent quite so cordially as my friend seemed to expect I should to the proposition that we had had a most lucky escape, having never been very strongly impressed with the notion of danger. My friend argued the matter warmly, and, at last, told me what, indeed, was likely enough to be true in general, and in the present case in particular, that I knew nothing about it. I shall have frequent

occasions to offer proofs of my admiration of a system of philosophy which I believe to be purely Italian, and which is of a nature so snug, concise, and complete, that, by about half a dozen turns of expression, it is possible to answer and provide for every possible contingency which may arise from the cradle to the grave. One of these is always put in requisition when a disputant has said all he is disposed to say, or all he is able to say perhaps; but it answers equally well in either case, and he withdraws from the contest unvanquished, and with the *honours of war* allowed him. After my companion had used argument, and proof, and action, and oaths, and grimace, sufficient to convince any body but myself, I made the most satisfactory reply, and the handsomest concession possible, by this choice bit of Italian philosophy, *può essere* (it may be). As no reasonable man, knowing any thing of Italian manners, could desire more than this, we jogged on very pleasantly for the remainder of the journey; the rain ceased, the sun again resumed his splendour, the evening was delicious, and as we mounted the winding road, and arrived at the uncouth-looking *porta* of *Arici*, we stopped to look down upon the beautiful country we had passed; the woods, the olive grounds, the vineyards, all lying under the eye, with the wide-spreading Campagna stretching out into the distance, and the broad Mediterranean Sea now reflecting the setting sun, and appearing an ocean of liquid gold or fire. All my companion's good-nature had returned, and his alarm ceased; he laughed out most boisterously, talked to the people who were lounging about, joked, asked questions, and then urged me to come on to the house he intended should be our quarters, with the most affable impatience and a giggle of delight.

Arici has been so often described, I suppose, by travellers, that it would be impertinent and impossible to say any thing new about it. To repeat what has been said would, according to my notions and the test of my experience, only tend to strengthen erroneous impressions concerning it, since I have generally discovered that every place I have seen described has been exactly the opposite of what I have found it. L'Arici, as it is commonly called, is the grand resort of the painters who visit and *locate* at Rome. Here they come in shoals, get together in herds, unite in taste and pursuits, and sympathise in clouds of tobacco smoke, oceans of wine, and forests of beards and whiskers. They come here after the labours of a winter of study at Rome, to restore their lost energies, exhausted at the academies and the *caffès*, to throw themselves in the way of new impressions, to stock their minds with images and their portfolios with sketches. It is quite pleasant to see the brotherhood that exists between them, which can only be matched by their industry. If one has his hair, or his beard, or his mustachios cut in a peculiar way, all the rest follow his example; and if one goes to paint a certain bit of rock, or a tree, which has been painted by every aspirant for fame from time immemorial, all the rest will go; and as Mr. West is said by his biographer (from which kind of friend Heaven defend us!) to have done, each and every one would go and "do one like it." Their perseverance, also, is re-



markable, for the same party will continue to sit all day, from morning till night, painting, and smoking, and drinking, and talking, round the self-same tree. All the rural nature seen in the pictures of the Rome-going and Rome-abiding artists is from Arici. There are a dozen other places near, such as *Marino* for instance, which offer some of the most splendid examples of trees and foliage, generally with rock and water, but nobody goes to them; that is to say, nobody comparatively.

I had an opportunity, the night I remained here, of witnessing one of the *orgies* of the painters, and I am sorry to record the fact for the honour of the craft, but I must say nothing could be more utterly inexcusable, uninteresting, and stupid.

My travelling companion, whom, from the hour we arrived, I had seen nothing of, came at about three hours of the night, that is about ten in all civilised parts of the world, to ask me to go with him to a party of his countrymen and others, who were enjoying themselves at a *locanda*, or inn, at the upper part of the town; and where, he told me, they were getting up a *petite comédie*. I was quite ready to go, and, if the truth may be told, to join in any fun or folly that could be offered to me. We went together, my companion describing to me what I should see; and, from what I *had* seen, I was pretty well prepared what to expect. In a very large old-fashioned room, a billiard-table occupying one part of it, I found a party of my brothers of the brush assembled, and engaged in a way for which it is impossible to find a name or to give a description. Each was stripped to his shirt sleeves at least, some without waistcoats, and most of them without cravats, with their necks open. This is nothing wonderful in a hot and a free country: but what were they doing? nobody could or can imagine. On a bracket, in an angle of one of the *uprights* which supported an arch, stood a large bowl surrounded with glasses of all shapes and sizes, with a kind of ladle in a kind of mixture which, for form's sake, was called *punch*, but what it was composed of I could not learn. It was made *partly* of *Italian rum*, that is, a kind of spirit manufactured out of *aqua vita*, a detestable compound in itself, and some other ingredient, with this were mixed lemon juice, wine, and a small quantity of water. This mixture, if not exceedingly palatable, had the recommendation of soon making a man drunk; and on that account was greatly to be preferred to the ordinary drinks. Over this cauldron of stuff there hung a very large horn, a very common ornament in this country, which had once adorned the head of one of those beautiful animals, the dove-coloured oxen, peculiar to Italy; and one of the party was furnished with a guitar. I was quite prepared for some kind of *extravaganza*, and therefore was not disposed to remark, or be over-critically nice about any thing that might take place. I joined, therefore, in the laugh and the noise, and tried to turn some odds and ends of sentences into meaning; I also drank some glasses of the mess they called *punch*, and *knocked* my glass with the rest, and resolved to make myself as great a fool as any set of fellows could desire. I managed to keep up the spirit of the thing for an hour perhaps, ex-

pecting from time to time that the current would cease to run in the same direction. In hopes of checking it, I asked the man who had the guitar in his hand to play or sing something. He gave a bang or two across the strings, set up a yell in which he was joined by the whole company, and then began cutting some extravagant capers, and mixed with the mad crew who were scattered about the room. The only sober or well-behaved people in the room were three men sitting with their legs hanging over the backs of some chairs, if I except one who stood on his head upon the table, smoking a cigar. Presently the *horn* was taken down, to the evident dismay of the landlady; one of the boobies put this upon his head, and immediately a yell and a wild laugh, that appeared as if it would never end, was raised at so happy a conceit, and was softened off with a fine imitation of the bellowing of bulls and buffaloes. During two hours from this time not an articulate sound was to be heard, nothing but one confused, discordant, inhuman, and horrible yell, such as one sometimes catches an intimation of by going too near a mad-house, or by visiting a collection of wild beasts at feeding time. I have seen men too far gone in drink to be tolerable, and sometimes too brutally vulgar to be bearable; but I never saw any specimen of the genus *homo*, upon any occasion, so thoroughly confounded with the lower order of creatures, so stupid and utterly devoid of all that the best-tempered man in the world could excuse or endure, as this assembly of the painters at Arici, — never!

The next morning, while making a little round, in order to see all I could before my departure, I witnessed one of those sights which, although familiar to Italian, give a shock to English, feelings. Ultimately I became sufficiently accustomed to such sights to look upon them almost without dismay, I cannot say with indifference; and I shall have some descriptions to give the reader by and by, which perhaps will test the strength of his nerves. There is a small circular chapel just as you leave Arici for Velletri, which stands on the left-hand side of the road, mounted up high upon a green bank, and embowered in the luxuriant foliage of some fine trees; I had peeped in as I passed, and saw a man removing a stone in the centre of the pavement. I passed on, and was going towards the gate of the town, when I observed a strange kind of object issuing from it. Three or four men were carrying upon their shoulders a kind of burthen, the character of which I could not make out. Rising above their heads was an elevated mass, formed of some red-coloured object, and displaying some gilding which glittered in the bright sun-light, and had a very singular effect. I stood on the side of the bank a little below the chapel watching this, and unable to tell in the distance what it might be. I saw it pass into the shadow of the tall trees that line the road, and then emerge again into the sunshine. It came on at rather a rapid rate, and presently I saw it begin to mount the bank, and take the path which led to the chapel. Every now and then I lost it in the windings of the path and among the trees; but it now came close under my eye, and I saw suddenly the dead uncoffined

body of an elderly woman, lying upon a bier, and carried along in the most unceremonious way possible, and dressed as I saw women of the lower orders walking in the streets. As it passed quickly before me, and the sun shone with his full brightness upon an object rarely seen but in the gloom, I was struck with a peculiar sensation, for which it is difficult to find a name. I walked on slowly towards the chapel, while the bearers made a little round which the path took, and I had then an opportunity of observing the particulars of the scene before me. The woman had one of those finely-marked heads which are peculiar to the papal states, a small broad forehead, strong straight nose, short upper lip, rounded chin, and square large jaw, and her look was full of severe expression. Her head was bare, and her grey hair tied with a green riband. A coarse linen *camicia* covered her arms and bosom; her thick stays were ornamented, and the lower part of her person was clothed in the dark red thickly plaited petticoat commonly worn. I observed her feet were naked, and her great toes tied together; while her arms, which crossed her breast, held in their hands a crucifix. The men who carried the body, on arriving at the door, put down their burthen; and, without any delay, hesitation, or ceremony, one taking the head of the corpse, the other the feet, they carried it into the chapel; and, just at the moment I came to the entrance, I caught a glimpse of something descending into the square opening I had seen in the floor of the building, and half a minute after I heard a low hollow sound, and a confused heavy splash into the dark waters of the grave below.

I felt a kind of shudder, and a chilly feeling come over me, at thus seeing a fellow-creature disposed of without the slightest ceremony, or even a look from the people engaged which betrayed a shadow of sympathy with the dead, or accorded in any degree with the solemn and horrible operation they had just performed. The bearers went immediately back with the bier. While the man left was engaged in replacing the stone, I asked him how it was that the corpse had been brought unattended by any body. He told me that it had been placed in the church all night, where it had been visited by those who liked to go and offer their respects or their prayers for the repose of its soul, and that it was brought out by the *beccamorti* to be buried. When I expressed my surprise that no ceremony attended it, he shrugged his shoulders and exclaimed, "*Ah, signore, che volete!*" (what will you have). The ceremony, I found afterwards, had previously been performed.

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#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Apologies still to Matilda Y.

Y. Z. is not so happy in his last, as in a former communication.

H. C.: thanks.

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THE  
ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S  
MAGAZINE.

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ON THE CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE OF LAND-  
SCAPE PAINTING,

BY J. B. PYNE.

THE writers upon the subject of the Arts of Design have been, in every instance, either historical or portrait painters ; and however successfully and fairly they have asserted the merits of their own pursuits, they have left untouched, or neglected, those of landscape painting\*, an omission which reflects as little credit on their taste as their fairness, so that its present important character and position have sprung from its own unaided and untrumpeted claims. On the other hand too much, as well as too little, may, by possibility, be challenged even for so noble and interesting a branch of pictorial art ; and an endeavour to place landscape in the same parallel with history painting, could only proceed from an excited and mistaken enthusiasm ; and an attempt to place it in a position above its capacity to maintain, might be the cause of its falling much below that point which may be justly claimed for its intrinsic worth and character.

Man is an egotist by nature, and he will always look upon the affairs of man as paramount to any other part of a system, however vast and comprehensive, in which he is apparently the principal mover ; therefore the headach of an emperor, or the passion of a petty prince, will occasion a much more vivid excitement than the sublime burst of a volcano, or the sweeping terrors of an avalanche.

It must, at the same time, be acknowledged that there are many who feel otherwise, and myself amongst them ; who would prefer Byron's storm among the Alps to the levee of a sovereign, where,

Far along  
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among

\* By far the most intelligent, philosophic, and comprehensive work on the subject of art which has issued from the press of the present day, is a work entitled "Modern Painters, their Superiority in the Art of Landscape Painting to the Ancient Masters ;" by a Graduate of Oxford ; the express object of which is to define and exalt to their proper sphere the merits of LANDSCAPE PAINTING. — ED.

Leap the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,  
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue,  
 And Jura answers from her misty shroud  
 Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night: — most glorious night!  
 Thou wert not made for slumber! let me be  
 A sharer in thy fierce and far delight, —  
 A portion of the tempest, and of thee!  
 Now the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!  
 And now again 'tis black, and now the glee  
 Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,  
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

The sense of hearing and that of vision are the grand causeways over which rush most of those impressions which beleaguer the mind by the feeling of sublimity. Those which attack us with any considerable force, through the senses of smelling, taste, and feeling, degenerate into fear and selfishness; as pain to a man possesses him too exclusively with anticipations of personal injury and possible destruction, to allow his mind to enjoy sufficiently the causes which may produce it, let them be exhibited in ever so grand a state, or on ever so sublime a scale. Thus the roar of a battle is lost in the pain of a shattered limb; and that of a storm in the anxiety to get a cloak around one, and the possible consequences of becoming drenched as "the big rain comes dancing to the earth."

No two passions can, at their maximum, occupy the mind at the same time; and though fear, to a certain extent, may accompany, if not be the immediate cause of, the sublime, that feeling must be displaced, as the first obtains ascendancy, which ends in terror, despair, and temporary, if not permanent, madness. The exhibitions produced by man on the largest possible scale are transcended by the operations of nature. The first form the available materials of the history painter, and the last those of the worker in landscape; while the extent to which they may be realised, either in the hands of one or the other, is an enigma not easily answered, without incurring the charge of invidiousness, and not requisite in explaining the sources from which may be drawn all that which is ennobling or exciting in either art. The difficulty in achieving anything great, of *maximising* what is calculated to produce high and vivid impression, would appear to be equal, as the instances of success are few in either style. And the superior interest attaching to one is operated virtually by the natural egotism of man, while the two are somewhat, if not completely, equalised by the superior grandeur and sublimity of the phenomena which form the high constituent materials of the other.

The difference in our individualism will always impel some to an admiration of one thing, and some to another; and if it be bad taste, I must pray "the powers that be" in art, as well as morals, to forgive me the sin of preferring the wailing of the storm, and the crashing and bellowing war of the volcano, to the screeching and hubbub of an

*auto-da-fe*, the beauties of a martyrdom, or a massacre of innocents. I speak of these exhibitions as occurring in reality, and feel that while the operations of nature come fresh from the hand of the Deity, the transactions of man operate through his necessarily warped agency.

The admiration of landscape scenery, apart from its augmentation of interest under the operation of an exhaustless variety of phenomena (varying from the winning simplicity of a purely pastoral character, passing through the different grades of beauty and grandeur common to a highly-diversified country, intimately associated with our leisure and diversion, and presenting the most natural and healthy means of refreshing and invigorating the intellectual powers of a commercial, scientific, and political community, and terminating only with the sublime terrors of external nature, in her most savage mood), would seem to be more vividly felt by the English than most other nations. A periodical retirement to the country is with them rather a passion than a matter of course; although, unfortunately for the higher orders of English society, the Autumn and Winter are the only seasons in which it can be enjoyed. At these times the cities are deserted, and the green and pleasant places of the earth are thronged with those for whom, during the summer months, the sun has smiled in vain.

At these times, the merchant rushes to the sea-side, or, leaving his load of responsibilities and cares behind, indulges in the freshness and quietude of his villa and park. The retired soldier, with a soul parched by Indian campaigns, throws himself, with the small or large produce of his sword, into the seclusion of some pastoral district; and the heart of the statesman or minister, frozen in the senate, thaws itself annually on the sunny spots of Old England, where, feeling the humanising effects of English landscape, it begets or strengthens a passion for English Landscape Painting.

Hence, in a great measure, arises that extensive and judicious patronage of one of the purest departments of the fine arts. Landscape nature, and its image, landscape painting, in their quietude, have the power of subduing and tranquillising the turbulent soul, and plays the same part to an over-excited temperament and imagination, as did the inspired harp of David to the fiery Saul. It has been very justly said by Sir Joshua Reynolds, that those works will always rank highest, which in producing require the greatest intellectual labour, and convey the greatest intellectual pleasure when produced.

THE DIFFICULTIES inseparable from the pursuit of landscape painting may be safely inferred to be great, from the few painters who stand prominently forward as the great leading stars of the style. ITS INFLUENCE may be gathered from its universal admiration by the most refined minds; and ITS ESTIMATION is as safely indicated by the prices awarded to its noblest productions, in an age not even comparatively dark, but one in which taste has been sublimed by high cultivation, and chastened by the contemporary strides of science and philosophy in all their possible bearings. It would, indeed, appear that landscape painting must wait its due and high appreciation, from a highly

polished and intellectual state of society; and in the present one there is no fear (if there be a very distant chance) of an accomplished and high character of work being overlooked or neglected by those of whom it may be proudly said, that a part of the business of their lives appears to be to mark and secure for their high-toned enjoyment any thing which may bear the indubitable stamp of genius.

In challenging for this style of art the character and influence thus attempted to be made out, it is not, of course, intended for a moment to include the mass of work that annually comes before the public eye. Landscape art, like every other art, and even its great mistress, Nature herself, must inevitably produce much absolutely bad, and much of mediocre, in arriving at that which is perfect. Were it not for this, from which nothing is exempt, selection and intellectual exertion would be at an end; one scene would be as good as another; and a painter would have merely to "put his palette on his thumb and go to Nature;" but the case is very different: while one man elevates the commonest scenes by high purpose and resource, another desecrates and debases to a grovelling level the grandest passages in Nature. Some follow the art as a business, and their productions are considered as furniture (hence the term furniture pictures); while others, making their profession the passion of their existence, bring to its aid a clear and philosophic mind, a poetical and classic sentiment, and a whole soul of high purpose and determination.

From those mines of intellect have appeared (though but occasionally) those rich gems of art, which stud so luminously the galleries already formed from the old, and those now forming from the living masters. It is intellect only which lifts landscape from the cold common-place of *pictorial topography*, into the high regions of the imagination; creates passion and feeling out of things in themselves passionless; and thus the legitimate operation of association and our sympathies wraps the genial and sunny landscape, equally with subjects of human life, within the closest folds of our affections. Without this high purpose and elevated treatment of which landscape may be said to be peculiarly susceptible, and of which we have numerous instances under our eye, it must yield to the illiberal doubts of Reynolds, as to the possibility of its being conducted upon the high principles which *should* regulate the painting of history; but with which, and without ostentation, it is capable of maintaining a position, second only to that of high history — a style which, for obvious reasons, grounded on the inimitable character of our nature, will always claim and receive the homage of man.

## ASSAULT ON OPINION.

" Che nulla giova il rallentar la corda,  
Quando l'arco di già scoccato ha il dardo.

*Satires of Sal. Rosa.*

MY readers will perceive that this *striking* and *appropriate* title is a parody upon one chosen and adopted by the editor of the "Art Union" (to wit), "Assaults on the Cartoons," in order to introduce some animadversions on an article which appeared upon those works in the Fifth Number of this Magazine, but which, for some reason or other, the "Art Union" forbears to name.

A person, therefore, who may *happen* to be ignorant of the existence of this work (if there be such a one, *hem!*), taking up the "Art Union," will read that a painter, of the name of Rippingille, a competitor in the honourable contest of the "Cartoons," has penned, printed, and published a certain article, in which some of the works of his brother artists are most severely and unjustly handled. He is, at the same time, most generously cautioned against *supposing* that any thing like jealousy, or disappointment, could have been the cause of this; and is then left to form his own conclusions of what *could* have tempted a man to act so shabbily towards his brothers; and he goes away convinced that so gratuitous and illiberal a proceeding could have sprung out of none but the worst of motives. Presently, however, he learns that this same Mr. Rippingille is the editor of a monthly periodical, and that the remarks complained of occur in his editorial and not in his private capacity. This may make some slight difference, although I am constrained to confess I can see but little myself. However I put it, with proper submission, to my brothers of the gentle craft of criticism, to determine whether, if I am not entitled to any great allowance on that score, that the fact, at least, ought to have been made known. I also am disposed to inquire whether my proper patronymic ought to have been used, and whether I am not entitled to some slight adumbration of that tender article a *name*, on the score of etiquette alone. Whether I am or am not, I don't care three farthings; and the only reason I mention a matter so trifling is from a wish to uphold, and in no degree disgrace, the calling to which, as a scribbler, I have taken.

And now let me see what it is that I have done. I know what I intended to do, but that is not always enough, since men make most egregious blunders with the best intentions in the world, and get both themselves and others into scrapes, out of which it is sometimes very hard indeed to escape, and in which they get neither help nor pity.

I remember when I wrote this same article, my motives *appeared* to me to be very good, and my object a perfectly clear one—conditions under which men, in a general way, get on pretty well. Have I blundered? quite possible. If I have, as I am always ready to allow



this plea to the "Art Union," or any other work which notices pictures, I am entitled to claim it; and if I have been guilty of any injustice to any body, or undue severity either, I feel I shall not be ashamed to acknowledge it.

Let me see: my proposition was and is, that the late exhibition of Cartoons in Westminster Hall, however honourable to the occasion, and the artists engaged in it, is by no means a fair exemplification of the artistic strength of the country, nor a fair test of the talent and capabilities of British artists.

I take my stand upon this, and will defend it against all comers!

I make no hesitation in asserting, that the talent displayed in these Cartoons is a very *unfair* representation; not only of the capabilities of English artists, but of the state of advancement of art in England. So here is the thing both positively and negatively asserted, and will admit of no mistake.

I also assert that those who have attempted to prove the contrary of this proposition, have done that which is calculated to injure the reputation of the country, to oppose the opinion of the intelligent portion of the profession, and to expose the weakness of their own.

It was a desire to combat this false and injurious impression which led to the criticism of the works in question. Much might have been said in their favour certainly, and, in a general sense, that was said; the which would have been a far more agreeable as well as a safer task than what has been undertaken; but this would rather have increased than lessened the apprehended evil. In stating that certain of these works were defective, it was necessary to point out in what their defects consisted, in order to show that the character of the exhibition is not of that high order which the public should be taught to look for or be content to find, nor what certain ill-judging people represent and would make it appear. Now, that this has been done with all the tact and tenderness that might have been, I by no means assert; but that the occasion justifies a rigorous examination and a bold exposition of the character of works in whose praise so much senseless stuff has been put forth, I stoutly contend for.

The most important consideration connected with their denouncement, is that which goes to show *they are not conceived in that high and pure spirit of art upon which rests its noblest character and its highest claims, as an important good and a source of national honour.* If this be considered, a great portion of what appears harsh and severe will be sufficiently softened and reduced, whilst an inattention or an ignorance of this will serve to give a sarcastic, unfeeling, and even an unjust tone to what has been advanced.

There are two questions which naturally arise in the reader's mind:—they are these—Why is not the late exhibition to be regarded as a fair example of the strength of the country in Art? Because it has the defects pointed out, and because there are men in it *who have done*, and are consequently capable of doing, infinitely better things. What

injury would have been done to British Art by considering this display as perfect as it has been represented to be? I answer, a very serious injury indeed, and one which would have operated in a variety of insidious ways, to the detriment of all who are engaged in its exercise, or interested in its welfare.

The first step which ought to be taken in favour of Art — in support of its honour, in furtherance of its welfare, in appreciation of its value, and in acknowledgment of its claims and advantages—is to learn its real condition and the true nature of its wants. The ignorant and the indifferent are necessarily careless of its fate. This is lamentable enough; but when the intelligent and the well-disposed are misdirected, or left without a guide, it is far worse. It has been asserted and argued in this work, that the greatest misfortune which attends Art at the present hour is, that its attributes and claims are but imperfectly and partially understood; and that the triumph of Art rests upon the exaltation of public taste. Under a conviction like this, one which I will make bold to say is felt by the whole profession, it is lamentable to see the power and influence of the machinery strengthened, which evidently tends to increase the evil complained of. Good-nature, and a feeling in favour of those who appear to wish well towards Art, and who have some ability to serve its cause, will naturally restrain any strong expression of disapprobation or disgust at what is undertaken for that purpose, out of respect for the motive merely; but it is not always possible or prudent to permit well-intentioned ignorance to blunder on undisturbed, where mischief is sure to follow as a matter of course. The editor of the “Art Union” appears a well-meaning man, with about as much knowledge of Art as writers in general; and his criticisms in the ordinary way have the high recommendation of being perfectly harmless, and as such they may be allowed to pass; but when they assume a pernicious character, they ought to be met and opposed. The editor of this work has a sincere and rather a peculiar respect for the criticisms of the public press generally, not from their accuracy, propriety, or fairness, but because the press, by its constant recurrence to Art, has kept the subject alive, and forced it upon the attention of people who would otherwise have passed it over, and let it fall “a dead letter,” in spite of any thing the *body* of the profession have done to support it. All the varieties and wonders of Art which have been detailed by the press, if neither true in the instances quoted, nor possible in the nature of things, have at least tended to convey a high idea of the capabilities of Art and artists, and thus recommended it to respect; so that the “Art Union,” as an item of that mighty instrument whose name ought always to be printed in capitals, lays claim to its portion of respect, so that it is always much more agreeable to praise than to find fault. A person well acquainted with Art cannot help wishing that Heaven had inspired the editor, since he could not possibly have obtained it in any other way, with a better knowledge of the subject; but it is something when a man does his best: as an intelligent man, however, he must be well aware that undeserved praise

is calculated to do far more mischief than unmerited censure in every possible way; and that if you can once persuade an aspirant in Art, or in any thing else, that he has done enough, it will very probably come to pass that he will try no more. This, however, is but a slight portion of the evil, which is immeasurably extended if you can persuade those by whom he is to be stimulated and supported that *they* ought to be satisfied. That restless yearning after perfection may die in individuals — vanity or weakness may kill it; but in the mass it is ever active and insatiate; and whenever it can be lulled by any means into *inactivity* even, the consequences are calamitous indeed. If excellence be lost sight of, the high aspirations which tend to the production of it on the one hand, and the appreciation of it on the other, will very soon follow. A more grievous injury cannot possibly be inflicted on any pursuit of human interest or good, than to lower the standard by which it ought to be judged.

No doubt there are people ready to exclaim, "Let us enjoy our triumph," and make the most of it; and why should you, Mr. Editor, yourself a painter and a competitor, wish to lessen the honours you might share in?" The editor of the "Art Union" cannot be led away by any sentiment so puerile; but it appears that he had not considered the matter and the part he has taken in it with all the seriousness required. This appears very striking when the tone of his remarks, general and particular, are examined and compared. It is, according to his showing, "the new birth of British Art," and "glorious to see." It is "the worthiest exhibition that ever took place within the walls of any building in England." "In a word, the issue (of this trial of skill) has been ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY, giving much at which to rejoice, and either *literally nothing*, or *next to nothing*, calculated to cause regret." "There appears to be but one opinion — the connoisseur, the critic, and the public, all concurring — as to the high merit of the collection *as a whole*. Of course, out of one hundred and forty works, contributed by about one hundred and twenty artists, there will be *many* mediocre, and some so *lamentably wretched* as to *excite wonder what conceivable obtusity of intellect* could have sent them to the Hall." This is pretty severe upon somebody, and rather a drawback upon the perfection of the collection "as a whole."

But let us go a little farther into particulars. I make no attempt to excuse myself, in any severity of which I have been guilty, by what has been done by another; but consistency is something. Let us take one of the works out of the "worthiest exhibition that ever took place within the walls of any building in England," and see what my brother critic makes of it. Let it be observed, also, that the work we pitch upon is stated to be "the most excellent production contained in the old hall." It is "No. 105., First Trial by Jury — Cope. An imaginary subject, but *none* better or more appropriate could be found; its *execution* has entitled the artist to a premium of the first class — 300*l*." An artist ought to do *something* with the best subject that could be found; let us see what has been done with it. "The .

trial is held *sub Jove*. Alfred himself presides, seated on the right, whilst on the left of the Cartoon are assembled the 'twelve good men and true,' the centre being occupied by the prisoner, the body of the murdered man," &c. Now comes the criticism, "The artist has limited himself" (*i. e.* his subject), the best or the most capable one that could be found, "to a narrative of the simple fact; whereas, we submit that so good a subject afforded opportunity of extensive allusion to the benefits of trial by jury." Now let me see what I have said in my "unfair, ungenerous, unmerciful condemnation." Of this work, which my tender brother asserts "has been very scurvily treated," I have said, after saying that for the choice of the subject alone the artist deserved the premium, "*it is defective in incident, that tells more than the bare fact; the subject is capable of a much wider range of feelings and expression, and infinitely more character; it wants earnestness, such as the early masters would have carried into it.*" But let us proceed:—"It is not necessary that if a man be a prisoner, he should also be a criminal." The artist has blundered in the character of the prisoner; "but the aspect of the prisoner in this case is so much against him, that we cannot help thinking Alfred in his justice must, in his charge to the jury, have endeavoured to divest their minds of prejudice." What a delicate and provisional criticism! for assuredly the accused belongs to a race of men

"With foreheads villanous low."

What perception! and what a wonder that the artist could draw a man with a low forehead! "The murdered man has left a wife and child, who are addressing evidence to the jury, into whose features more of inquiry might have effectively been thrown." Here is another blunder, — a jury of twelve men defective in expression: some capital heads among them nevertheless! But let us proceed. "Alfred is again a failure!" a precious blunder this; "he does not look like a man to make head against the Danes; the features should have been distinguished from all around, as much as he himself was in advance of the time in which he lived. To this drawing shadow is almost denied;" another blunder; "and with injurious effect, for much force could otherwise have been communicated." You see, Sir, you are in the hands of a real critic, who can tell you what could have been done, as well as what you have left undone: you have left out the shadow, and lost the effect!! "The work will bear these *slight* objections, for, as a whole, it is the *most excellent production contained in the old hall*" — What must the worst be?—"and as such it is regarded by all classes, the refined and the ignorant. The group in the centre — the widow and her orphan boy — is a most eloquent reading (?!); and the 'twelve' are admirably composed" — so composed, that they want expression and contrast. The Cartoon is, moreover, "drawn with great skill. It has elevated Mr. Cope to a high professional rank."

There is praise for you! With what intelligence, perspicuity, taste,

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and feeling, the peculiar merits of this Cartoon are pointed out. And its faults are so "*slight*:" let us enumerate them.

No. 1. A "limited instead of an ample number of facts, illustrative of as good a subject as could be found, 'capable of' extensive allusion," &c.

No. 2. The prisoner a criminal, instead of a person merely suspected.

No. 3. The jury defective in the expression of "inquiry," *i. e.* earnestness of purpose, penetration, &c.

No. 4. The principal personage a *failure*! — defective in character, and not distinguished from the ordinary people about him.

No. 5. A want of shadow, force, and effect!!!

Talk of damning a man with faint praise, or "assaulting" him with severe and unmerited censure, is there any one, in such a case as this, who would hesitate which to choose?

Shall we take another criticism or two — "Cæsar's First Invasion of Britain." How much there is in a name! We should not have known that this was the *first* invasion of Britain, or the *first* trial by jury, by anything seen in the Cartoons of these subjects, if we were not told. "The drawing has all the square and decided character of the modern French school;" a high recommendation, considering *what* schools have existed in the world, and perhaps exist at present; but unfortunately, "although well adapted to give force to such a scene, it cannot be doubted but that in colour it would lose much of its positive effect." What a pity! "The position of Cæsar himself is, however, a very questionable one, for he appears circumstanced rather as *after a defeat* than *before a victory*;" — rather an unlucky blunder. "Much has been sacrificed to get a likeness of him; he is uncovered in the front of a determined enemy — a circumstance very improbable that he should be alone while urging on the standard-bearer, or those near him. The figure is also deficient in dignity and self-possession — not that the occasion would not justify some degree of *confusion* in another commander (better ask his Grace the Duke of Wellington); but it is not consistent with the character of Cæsar. The Britons do not appear in sufficient numbers." The reason Cæsar appears in such a "degree of confusion perhaps is to justify the backwardness of the Romans; and it is not sufficient to suppose them in imposing multitudes." Very clear and acute! "The figures are moved by variety of intent, all contributing to the main purpose, with the exception of him who is restraining the horse, and *his object is not apparent*. The work is one of high promise, and we trust is the precursor of yet better things." *Ainsi soit il!*

Now let us take a peep at Caractacus. "Caractacus is a living presence: he sees and thinks, but laments his fate *too much*; for in considering what he is, he ought not to forget what he has been;" certainly not; "he has *therefore* scarcely dignity enough;" of course he could not lament with dignity. "The artist seems to have selected heads of every variety, from the Briton to the Hindoo;" a tolerable

extensive sweep, and, as the scene is laid in the streets of Rome, nothing could be more appropriate; "and has happily modified their expression respectively." In this respect we may say the best conception has been least worthily treated — that is, the head of Caractacus himself. "We know not why he has been drawn with a forehead so narrow;" no doubt this was to "modify his expression." "If it is intentional, it is wrong in principle; and, with respect to proportion, it is too narrow for the cast of face. There is little seen of the circumstance of a triumph;" rather an important omission, but the place of this is well supplied by the "*vitality* of the figures" — nice distinction; "there are no trophies, no spoils, but the historical is well supported (in history it may be supposed), and brought forward in a manner sufficiently probable. This composition was not originally intended for this exhibition; portions of the design were executed, *perhaps the whole*, two or three years ago, on another frame, as preparatory to being painted in oil." What an unhappy thing for a man to have either a commentator upon his merits while living, or a biographer after his death. "We mention this as a proof, that by returning frequently to a work with a fresh eye, many of those glaring errors are avoided into which artists fall, by too great a confidence in their powers of rapid execution, which so often means *bad composition and faulty drawing*." Really this is almost too much for the strongest stomach — hapless, hopeless imbecility!

It may be worth while to append a comment to this admirable text. — Artists fall into errors through haste, and are often disposed to take more credit for rapidity of thought and action than they deserve. It certainly matters but little to the public when a good work is produced, whether its author has been employed upon it three days or three years; but it is pretty generally admitted that it is easier to do a good thing in a long course of study than in a very short space of time, impromptu and out of hand. The reason for this is, that the rapid operator gives evidence that he has already learnt, and has in his possession, the thing which is required of him. The slow one gives evidence that he has neglected, or is incapable of seizing at once, what he is required to produce, and what can only be attained by long and laborious practice, while no doubt can exist that he is as willing as another to produce his work in the shortest time. It is very creditable to the gentleman in question to be the author of such a work as the "Caractacus;" but all the world will admit that it would have done him three times as much honour to have achieved what he has done in one year instead of three. We will not think of the demands of fresco, and the readiness necessary to cope with the materials employed, or of the picture of the "Miracle of the Slave," painted by Tintoretto in thirty days, or of the "Heliodorus," said to have been executed by Raphael in forty; nor of several elaborate Cartoons in the late exhibition, produced in one *month each*; nor of *one* in particular, which the writer of this article knows to have been executed in *two days*, and which he does not hesitate to assert is one of the cleverest

productions of the whole collection. He does not like praising a man, particularly after such examples of praise as have been given, or he would point it out for fear he should be thought to refer to his own; but he will run the risk of that, and not anticipate time, who is a severe commentator upon both painters and critics.

Of the inconsistency, as well as the vanity and weakness, of criticism, sufficient samples have been offered; but as there is a variety, we will cull one more. This is No. 31., "The Angel Raphael discoursing with Adam," Sir W. Ross, R.A. "Three figures are seated in the bower, the pair side by side, and opposite the

‘Sociable spirit that deign’d  
To travel with Tobias.’

The innocent state of the parents of mankind *has never been more felicitously alluded to* than here. The angel is robed, and maugre a degree of stiffness, there is yet *much grandeur in the figure*, which is opposed to the undraped figures of Adam and Eve, and, aided by the feeling thrown into them, points attention at once to the happy state of which the poet so often and so emphatically speaks. Adam is seated, intent upon the argument of his angel visitant; Eve is toward the spectator, and fondling a lamb. Eve has been rarely more happily rendered—it is an *exquisite figure of a perfect woman*."

Now if words mean any thing, this is tolerably strong praise, "an exquisite figure of a *perfect woman*;" applause in a few words can hardly go farther. If we turn to another part of the same article in the same paper, we shall find this eulogium a little qualified. Sir W. Ross, with nine other outcasts denounced by the "Art Union" as unworthy to "partake of the feast," and obliged to be "made content with the scraps left at the banquet," is one of two members of the Royal Academy, upon whose degradation some very tender comment and sympathy is exercised and wasted. It is astonishing how blind men and bodies are to their own interests, and after such a warning too! Hear what is said:—"From time to time we have presumed to warn the Royal Academy of the risk they were incurring (in not competing); they have abided the issue, and must take the consequences." This gentleman and another were warned and *would* try their luck in the competition; upon which it is most generously remarked, that, "of the Royal Academy, those who competed were just those who ought, for their own sakes, and for the honour of the institution, to have done nothing of the kind." One would suppose that the gentleman upon whom all this praise for his Cartoon is bestowed, was fairly entitled to try; he who could produce an "exquisite figure of a perfect woman," might, one would suppose, be allowed to try his hand at an "Eve" even; but we are told he is just one of those who ought to have done nothing of the kind.

But enough and too much of this. I am accused of unfairness, want of generosity, want of mercy, and God knows what besides! and the delinquencies of another are no excuse for me. Let me look to

the charge—"Assaults on the Cartoons." A grave charge verily; one would think that I had made a dozen, or that every writer of the day had done so. The commencement, "Et tu Brute," is peculiarly appropriate, and would induce the reader to believe that a host of daggers menaced these victim Cartoons, if it were not said that "almost the only blow" was given by me. I must observe, *en passant*, that I am sorry to see my brother so much put out of humour by the little I have done to offend him, because if I were disposed to do my worst, I don't know what might be the consequence. He must have seen by my last Number with what resignation I bear its being told me and others whom I am disposed to respect, that it was not *our merits* which procured an award of 100*l.*, but that "other considerations than those of actual merit weighed with the judges." The judges say *no*, but that is hardly enough to console us under such a mighty *denouncement*. Then, again, he ought to look at the temper in which I bear having it flung in my teeth that I missed the prize I endeavoured to obtain. It is sometimes considered praiseworthy to treat the unsuccessful—those who have at least the merit of honourable endeavour on their sides—with tenderness, and above all not to sink one fact, the only one which reflects a *little* credit—namely, the having obtained one slight mark of approbation or of pity, just as my brother critic pleases, by "an award" of 100*l.* offered to ten unworthy dogs, myself among the rest. I don't think this fact should have been entirely blinked. Indeed I doubt very much whether the spirit in which the critic criticised is executed, be quite what it ought to be. It is scarcely worth the trouble, perhaps, to reply to remarks which are directed against the man, instead of the matter he has produced. Yet sometimes when a man treats an attack upon him with what is called "silent contempt," half the number of persons who think the matter in dispute worth their attention, are disposed to fancy that the assailed has nothing to say for himself, so that he loses one way as much as he gains another. I beg, therefore, that the reader will excuse my leading him a little farther into the thick of the fight.

The obnoxious article, we are told, affords "conclusive evidence of the difficulty which an artist must feel in criticising the works of his contemporaries, and the almost impossibility of rendering them full and ample justice, to say nothing of generosity." It would have been well if this sapient critic had told us *why*. We are told that it is by no means "intended to infer that disappointment at not having one of the prizes awarded to the writer, caused the very unfair and ungenerous view he has taken of the works of successful rivals." Then why should not one artist criticise another fairly? Is an aspirant for honour more certain of having fair play from a non-professional scribbler than a professional one? Are self-interest, gross ignorance, apathy, and empty pretence likely to afford better treatment of what they take in hand, than a good knowledge of the subject, mixed though it be with professional jealousy, and the irritation arising from defeated expectations? Few sensible artists can be found who would



not rather trust to the last than the first. "Wisdom," it is asserted, "at least, if not *mercy*, might have prompted the writer to have withheld what he has said." What noble advocacy it is, which, however much truth and justice is on the side of its clients, still recommends them to mercy! "We have not," observes this critic, "considered ourselves bound to show, what, however, we do not hesitate to assert, that the criticisms of Mr. Rippingille are altogether unsound." No; this would have given the critique of the "Art Union" a degree of consequence; could it have been done, the attempt to do it would have rendered it still more pitiable than it is. "In several instances they are ridiculous to a degree, as, for example, in noticing the trial by jury, it is said that '*There is no evidence that the parties are engaged in the presence of a murdered corpse and the perpetrator of a dreadful crime. No observant person who has ever entered a court of justice, or the room of a coroner's inquest, can mistake what is here meant, or fail to feel what is wanting.*'" Upon this it is observed, "we confess this reads very like nonsense." It is very likely it may, and be very good sense at the same time. Printing "perpetration" for "perpetrator" tends slightly to give it that character; but the following remark, explanatory of the *confession* made, goes rather beyond it; it is so truly naïve and simple, that it cannot fail to recommend the writer to that consideration pointed out by Dr. Knox in his "Essays," who remarks that a "man cannot have a higher recommendation than that he still retains something of the child." To the remark that the looks of the parties engaged in the trial do not bear evidence of the presence of a murdered corpse and the perpetrator of a dreadful crime, and the reader is referred to the effect he has seen produced in a court of justice or the room of a coroner's inquest, to obtain an idea of what is wanting—all this is replied to by Mr. Samuel Carter Hall, barrister-at-law, F.S.A., and editor of the "Art Union" (whose name ought to be coupled with the remark, and who will excuse being named *once only* in this long article), with this cogent and conclusive sentence, "*the surest 'evidence' is the dead body Mr. Cope has drawn, and the murderer, who cannot be mistaken!!!*" To be sure; how can there be a want of evidence that the parties are in the presence of a murdered corpse and a murderer, when they are both before their eyes, drawn by the artist!

We really cannot fall out with a man, who at the same time he is cutting us to pieces, is so civil as to make us laugh in the midst of our tortures enough to kill ourselves. But now comes a little bit which is not quite so civil and well-bred as it might be: people should stick to the matter in dispute, and not indulge in remarks meant only to be personally offensive; to attack a man looks very much as if you could not answer his arguments, and is generally considered silly. "*We do not quarrel with Mr. Rippingille's opinions, sound or unsound.*" Why, what is it *they* do quarrel with? "He is perfectly at liberty to prefer a Satyr to Hyperion." What generosity for a man to allow that to another over which he can exercise no con-

trol! The remark has about as much aptitude as good sense, good nature, or good taste, since not a word has been said of a preference—I have not puffed up one painter to put down another; how then have I deserved so gross and clumsy an impeachment of my taste and my likings? I am sorry to differ with my learned brother even here; I do *not* think myself at liberty to do any such thing: my learned brother *may*; he may be at liberty to confound the good and the bad, and to beslobber with senseless praise what he knows he does not either understand or feel; but I must say, I do not.

But enough, and too much of this. Let me return for a moment to my original proposition, in which I assert and maintain that the last exhibition of Cartoons in Westminster Hall, got up and executed in furtherance of the noblest scheme of patronage that ever reared its honoured head in this country, is a very imperfect and unfair representation of the artistic strength of British Art; that it is a display of merit in the aggregate, creditable to the occasion and the parties engaged in it, and that it is *no more* than any person conversant with art would have anticipated, but perhaps *rather less*; that it is not a “glorious triumph” in Art, but a successful effort in rousing the dormant perceptions of the public to the capabilities of artists. The grounds of these opinions I find in the twenty-five years’ experience and observation I made on the works which have been produced by certain men I could name, and I have learnt to depend more on what I have seen achieved, than upon what is promised, even though the prophecy emanates from such an oracle as the “Art Union.”

Some people are so dull and obstinate that nothing but the plainest matter of fact can be either felt or seen by them. Must I support my hypothesis, that better things could be done by the names of some who have done them? Very well, Mr. Editor, then you shall have them in alphabetical order, which I hope will content you, soften your temper, and brush up your understanding. Here they are,—

Sir Augustus Callcott,  
Abraham Cooper,  
George Cattermole,  
C. L. Eastlake,  
William Etty,  
J. R. Herbert,  
Edwin Landseer,

Charles Landseer,  
— Leslie,  
John Lewis,  
Daniel Maclise,  
George Patten,  
— Uwins,  
&c. &c. &c.

These and twenty more have done, and consequently *could* do, infinitely *better things*. You don’t believe it, Sir? Very well; then, I must give you the names of some of them:—Edward Armitage, Cope, Bell, Townsend, Watts, &c. &c.

## LETTER FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

DEAR EDITOR,

Your animadversions of last month upon the Cartoons, then exhibiting, I observe are commented upon in the "Art Union" in a spirit which naturally begets a suspicion in the mind of the reader, that it was rather intended to insult you for what you have done, than to answer and refute what you have said. I can't say that I pity you much, since you ought to have remembered that you were writing to the public, and not speaking to artists. I agree with you entirely in the truth of what you have asserted, and I understand clearly the motives by which you were guided; but at the same time, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact, that the free and unqualified remarks in which you have indulged are unfit for the public, and calculated to raise a suspicion of that with which you are so *handsomely* charged in the "Art Union." I am persuaded that people in general have not the slightest notion of the dissatisfaction with which a real artist views his own works, nor the terms he employs, particularly when speaking to artists, expressive of that dissatisfaction—the same terms applied to the work of another appears the severest censure. It is not intended for a compliment; but what you have said of the works of certain of your brother competitors, I am disposed to consider as if you had been speaking of your own. I remember a most admirable illustration of this sort of thing, which was given me by the late Sir William Beechey, one of the most honest as well as the most talented men of his time. He had painted a "Hebe," and when it was finished, the gentleman for whom it was executed called and addressed himself to the painter something in this way: "Well, Sir William, you have finished my picture; I am delighted with it." "I wish I could say as much," growled the artist. "What!" exclaimed the patron, "don't you like it?" "I can't say that I do." The gentleman looked a little *posed*; but, smiling, he asked, "Why, what is the matter with it?" "Every thing that ought not to be the matter," was the reply. The gentleman looked blank. "It is no more like a Hebe," observed the painter "than I to Hercules—a personation of adolescence, that sweet mixture of the girl and the woman, the charming simplicity of the one combined with the conscious beauty of the other—Eve, before she had tasted the apple, and after—the morning merging into day—the soft down of the immature fruit diffused over its juicy ripeness—the substance of the child moulded into the form of the woman—the eye conversant alone with heaven, for the first time turned to earth—the cheek with its first blush—the lip offering its first kiss. Nonsense, Sir,—d—d nonsense! it can't be done—mere vanity of art! humbug! nonsense!" "I am sorry," remarked the gentleman, "that you are so dissatisfied with it; but you can alter it." Sir William shook his head. The patron was evidently embarrassed, and knew not what to say; at last, with some hesitation, he hinted that he

would leave it a little while with the artist; and presently he intimated that he would not have it—that as it was so little like what Sir William intended, he had better not, indeed he thought that he *ought not, to take it*. Sir William, whose manner partook a little of that roughness which was characteristic of his honesty, looking at his patron with a smile, observed, “Then by God I think you ought; and I’ll tell you why—because you can get nobody to paint you a better.”

A gentleman met my friend Mr. Collins one day in the street, and was expressing in the most earnest terms how much he was shocked at some remarks he had seen in a public print upon one of his pictures, when the artist stopped him short, and smiling, said, “Oh, is that all? You would be more surprised if you were to hear what I have to say about it myself. A friend commiserated Mr. Leslie on the situation in which a picture of his was hung in the exhibition of the Royal Academy, and expressed himself exceedingly hurt at the circumstance. “I am sorry to see you so much disturbed,” observed the artist; “an idea that you would have been so much annoyed, would have induced *me* to hang it in a better place!” Poor Opie used to shrink back into a corner when any one brought his pictures into a strong light; what would he have said to have had his merits *illuminated* by the “Art Union?” You appear to have forgotten all at once what kind of an education in art the public have had, and how totally they are unacquainted with the ways of artists; and it is not impossible that the public feeling may have been rendered a little morbidly tender by the false and fulsome fooling of certain critics, who admire without discrimination, and praise and blame without *conscience*. What is said in the language in which painters speak to each other is either harsh or unintelligible to the public ear; it is no wonder therefore if your criticisms upon the Cartoons should be misunderstood and misrepresented; the same quantity of truth might have been put into a form less startling to the public.

It is no small misfortune to Art that it has to seek both supporters and critics from a community for which education has done nothing, and that to the evils inflicted upon art by its own deficiencies it reflects those done to itself by the empty assumption, pretence, ignorance, venality, malice, and blundering of those who, without any claim to knowledge, have the vanity and the weakness to offer themselves as guides. A hundred such articles as that complained of, whether false or true, will do less real injury to Art than one which holds up to admiration works of inferior merit as high examples of British skill. Every person possessed of good feeling towards Art will be gratified to find any effort of artists taken up, warmly applauded, and rewarded liberally; but he is weak indeed, who does not see that inordinate and unmerited praise is calculated to affect the efforts of artists, and to impede the progress of taste,

In the diseases of art, as in those of the body, a sensible patient will rather prefer a decided, and even a rigorous treatment, than to be tampered with as if his physician only half understood his complaint,

or feared that his strength might fail under the necessary treatment; it is at once a compliment both to his constitution and his courage. A regular practitioner, who has an eye to his own reputation and the good of his patients, will always prefer this course; while quacks and empty pretenders who regard neither, and look only to the *fee*, will be content to recommend their simples and their slops, and have the impudence still to puff their practice and their nostrums, while people of sense regard them with disdain, and their dupes sink under them.

There is in the last number of the "Art Union" a letter from a gentleman who has "lately made a visit to London," and who speaks of the Cartoons in most *unmeasured* praise — just in that strain which is so objectionable. He calls this display "the glorious triumph of English talent." It is a triumph; but over what? can he tell? if not, his applause is worthless, and calculated to do more harm than good. It is the reply to this question that will prove whether it is really a triumph worth making the grounds of our national honour, or one of those instances of success which a sensible artist will think nothing of, except in regarding what has taken place as a fortunate opportunity of proving to a discerning public *that* which it was not prepared for, but still that which it *ought* to have foreseen could at any time be effected by the capabilities of the artists who live in it, and form part of it. This is about the extent of the triumph claimed either by men of taste or men of sense, and no more.

The editor of the "Art Union," who appears to stand in wholesome awe of a certain Dr. Merz, who has made an "assault" upon British art, and who, with a great deal of what is malicious, false, and stupid, has introduced some galling truths, appears to have no fear for the honour of criticism, as well as the honour of art. He does not appear to think that praising men beyond their deserts and wide of their merits has any tendency to expose them to the animadversions of the sharp-sighted; that an editor may possibly blind the good-natured portion of *the* public who are his readers, the men he eulogises, and perhaps himself, but that he does not change the facts by his applause. A conscientious man will fear to do mischief to the cause he espouses; and if he be weak enough to fancy he can blind the simple and the diffident by the dust he throws in their eyes, he can scarcely hide from himself, even when his motives are pure, that, as he knows nothing of the subject upon which he expatiates, his ignorance may do more injury than his best intentions can do good. There are matters in this world upon which men in general think it their duty to exercise some conscience. A friend threatened with a lawsuit is recommended to go to an attorney, one in a fever is commended to the care of a doctor, but in matters of taste it is another thing altogether. A painter puts forth his works both to instruct as well as to learn from the public, and asks sympathy and help, as men do in other conditions. The lawyers and the doctors are at his side and at his service, ready to offer the aid and the information they have acquired by long labour and study; but immediately up struts an impudent quack, who has

had no means whatever of acquiring the information he is impertinent enough to offer, and thrusting himself forward, drowns with his noise and insults with his presence those who have it in their power to give and those who desire to receive what is required. What modesty has no power to effect, conscience has no influence to restrain; it is but the *reputation* of a man who cannot or will not take the trouble to defend himself. It is not to be supposed that an assailant, careless of wielding a direct and positive means of mischief, should be scrupulous enough to stop and inquire what may be the influence and the consequences of employing one that requires to be handled with the utmost delicacy, intelligence, and taste, to save it from doing more harm than the other. "God protect me against my friends," is a maxim founded in the best experience of mankind, but it is rather a guide to talk by than to act upon; and "Defend me against my enemies," will always be the favourite of the vulgar; and when a clumsy eritic is induced from any motive that may urge him to offer praise, he is silly enough to fancy he confers a great obligation. He seems always to forget that praise and censure, like every thing else, are very much modified by circumstances, and affected by the source from whence they come. It is not one severe remark that will give a stamp of unfeeling harshness to the pen of a writer — one blunder which will make you suspect his knowledge — nor one ambiguity which will obscure his motives, and cast a slur upon his integrity: it is the principle by which he is guided, and which shows itself in the generality of cases, which will characterise both his means and his end. Neither will praise please or stimulate, when the source from which it flows can be suspected; and that is ever the most worthless which is not backed by the necessary information, as well as supported by the required integrity.

In praising the merits of the exhibition of Cartoons, and exalting it into a glorious triumph, it would have been better to have pointed out in what its excellence consists; but the editor of the "Art Union," knows too well his own weakness to attempt any thing but vague and vapid generalities. A combatant who takes the safe side of a fight may be applauded for his prudence; but when he cuts a contemptible figure, even *there* his prowess must be of a low order indeed, and even his sincerity in the cause will be questionable.

It would have been far better to have *exposed* the errors of one who differs with him in opinion than to denounce him by unsupported charges or silly insinuations. It is by no means desirable to edify the public by a squabble between two editors, otherwise it might be shown that the manner in which the one writes to the other has as little to recommend it as the matter. No doubt it caused great "regret," as the editor states it did, to refer to the obnoxious article, and much more that he could not answer it. Perhaps in a case of such deep affliction, mixed as it must have been with some resentment for your having dared to differ with so highly esteemed and admired an authority, you ought to be looked upon as amazingly fortunate to be let off so easily. You ought, Mr. Editor, to be particularly grateful for that

kind morsel of advice which recommends you not to praise yourself: it is so considerate and premonitory; some people would have waited until you *began*, when it might have been too late to have done any good. You ought to congratulate your brother critic also in having found and pointed out so good and wholesome an example as your "brother artist and critic," a gentleman "of whose powerful aid" in the case of Dr. Merz, the "Art Union" professed itself proud to avail itself. It is to be hoped that he will acknowledge the obligation. There is a remark of the editor of the "Art Union," which betrays a prophetic and prospective concern for your good, and which you ought in no wise to overlook; it says as much as that, "in the course of a few years," you will be ashamed of what you have written: you certainly ought to return your brother critic the compliment *if you can*, and say that you hope, with most of his friends, that in the same space of time, or in a longer, he will show similar signs of grace.

It appears by the luminous showing of your brother editor that "you are treading precisely the same road, and are in peril of the same destiny," *by taking the opposite direction*, as your brother artist and brother critic, who it appears has execrated the "Royal Academy in all shapes and forms," while you are found "eulogising it through thick and thin." The critic of the "Art Union" prefers no doubt his own method, which may be adapted to his own purposes, and not inaptly termed a "thick-and-thin system of eulogising it one day and abusing it the next." But I think I see you ready to make an atonement for your offence, and declare that if you have praised the Royal Academy more than it deserves, you are sorry for it.

I am amused, with many others, to see how cleverly the fact of your having attained one of the prizes is kept out of sight, and even negatived. It is also curious to observe the remarks made upon you, namely, that you assume the "judges" are "entire boobies," and that you believe them to be both ignorant and partial. Upon my word, I thought this rather a heavy charge against you until I turned to some remarks in your Magazine, where I find you saying, "As was to be expected, there are various opinions on the justice and propriety of the decision itself; but there is but *one* upon the *perfect integrity* and uprightness of purpose with which the whole matter was conducted." (Vide No. V.) To what absurd lengths will a bad spirit lead a man!

Your remarks on the *possible* fallacy and imperfection of the mode adopted in deciding and awarding the premiums has struck me as having great point in them, and I know from the mouth of one of the gentlemen engaged in that important decision that it was a matter which very much disturbed him—as a circumstance difficult to cope with, and unpleasant to reflect upon.

The "Art Union" critic will not see that taking this view of the case slightly interferes with the perfection of the decision, without in the least degree impugning the motives or the judgment of the judges. By the way I see that the same gentleman who visits London to see the Cartoons, and who exults in the "glorious triumph," has but just

made a discovery of the fact mentioned by your Number for August, that nine out of the eleven who obtained prizes were pupils of the Royal Academy, a fact which all but the writer and the readers of the "Art Union" knew long ago. It is astonishing how slowly knowledge travels in certain quarters, and what pains certain people take to procure and promulgate it! I am greatly amused by the fastidious delicacy displayed by the editor of the "Art Union" on the subject of a man's praising himself. In speaking of your "brother critic and painter," he observes, "The criticism of a painter on his own work is a mournful example of the folly into which temper may lead a man. It is grossly absurd." The editor prefers that the painter should get somebody to do it for him, perhaps on the plea that a man who pleads his own cause has a fool for his client. It is curious such delicate sensibility should attach to such a quarter—one that can make such nice distinctions in words, and confound them in things. If we look at an advertisement in the first page of the "Art Union" of September, we shall find a proof of this fact in connection with a choice bit of criticism. This advertisement is headed, "The children with rabbits," &c. It is there recommended, as is the practice, by a quoted authority of proper consequence: it says, "Of all Mr. Landseer's portrait pictures this is the most striking, and displays the most unquestionable marks of genius. The composition is very simple, but very sweet. It is one of those home pictures that must delight all classes, because all will understand and appreciate it." Who has said this, does the reader think? The "Art Union." And where is it said? In the "Art Union." But I am forgetting the object with which I began this letter. Mind you, I cannot entirely hold you blameless, even though I can't say you are wrong; and as for the motives attributed to you, you will do by them as many will do—perhaps the victims themselves—laugh. It is not natural to suppose that these gentlemen are very well pleased with your remarks; but I think I can venture to say there is something which would annoy more, namely, the praise of the editor of the "Art Union."

I am yours truly,

M. G.

## LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT.

*(To the Editor of the Artist and Amateur's Magazine.)*

SIR,

I fear there can be little hope that *high* Art will take root amongst us, when I find one of the journals exclusively devoted to the interests of Art, endeavouring to render useless the only sound effort at criticism that has appeared on the very important exhibition in Westminster Hall. Although I had seen your publication from



its first Number, yet I hesitated to give it my confidence, from the dread of false criticism; but when I found such sound views, and so much courage in putting them forth, I felt bound to recommend your Artist's and Amateur's Magazine on all hands.

The editor of the "Art Union" has done you great injustice in the *mode* of noticing your remarks on the Cartoons, and perhaps he may influence a small body of mediocre painters to think with himself that you are "unwise" in trusting to *truth*, and that "good taste" should have suggested your suppressing it—maxims that, I fear, have generated the namby-pamby criticisms in that Journal.

In your remarks on the Cartoons, you have once or twice passed into hyper-criticism; but no artist or amateur who has seen the sublime and truthful art of Italy with feeling and understanding, but must declare you have acted both "wisely" and with "good taste."

Mr. Armitage, I hope, will benefit by your true review of his well-executed work, for he has been honoured by being weighed against the mighty men of Italy. Mr. Watts will candidly confess what you have said of his elegant and well-considered Cartoon to be perfectly true. Long before your criticism appeared, I went through the collection with a travelled painter of great reputation; we perfectly coincided as to the sources from which Mr. Watts had derived many of his excellent figures.

With regard to Mr. Cope, you appear to have acted with least judgment, though still with *sound* views; but Mr. Cope will cheerfully look through the mode up to the aim, for he is a lover of *Art*; and in his soul (for he has well considered the riches of Italy) must acknowledge that the collected mass of pictorial ideas now in Westminster Hall sadly wants *elevation*. The Cartoons are well executed, but are pitched on a low key of thought; and you, Sir, have been the only person to point this out: yet, Sir, there is an excuse for our painters, in the fact that Art is almost always demanded by the public for its mere ornamental quality. Those admirable men who awarded the prizes, no doubt *felt* much of what you have *said*; and therefore you need not apprehend that they will consider your remarks as implying they were "ignorant or partial," as meanly declared by the "Art Union" editor.

What you say of Mr. Horsley's work is strictly true; indeed, the whole of your article on the Cartoons ought to be widely circulated, for it is calculated to give general *instruction*, and be a *guide* to the public.

*True* criticism is what the public *now* require, and not such stuff as emanates from the "Art Union"—only calculated to avoid giving offence to the painters.

Though you have determined "not to comment on the merits of contemporary artists, except on especial occasions," yet when you feel called upon to do so, ever fix your eye on the high objects aimed at in your late remarks on the Cartoons, for your opinions will

be received with advantage and respect by the great majority of painters.

Sept. 8th. 1843.

I am, Sir, yours,

A PAINTER.

[I insert this letter as I received it, without knowing the source from which it comes. If my object in putting forth the remarks I have upon the merits of the Cartoons was really an honest and a good one, I consider myself justified in attempting to establish the propriety of such attempt by every means in my power. It is for this reason that I now offer to the inquirer a proof, if he will admit it as such, of the opinion of an item of the public in confirmation of my own, and not with any view of defending or screening myself from the consequences of what I have said, or of finding an excuse even for the mode and manner in which my remarks have been conceived or executed.]

#### A FOUR YEARS' RESIDENCE IN ITALY.

WE left *L'Arici* on one of those bright mornings which indicate a noon of a *white heat*. Whether tourists and scribblers in general love to be as far from the truth as they are from home, or whether they choose to describe only the agreeable portion of what they feel and see, it is impossible to determine; but they generally take care, by some method they adopt, that if ever you happen to find yourself upon the spot you have seen described, you discover that every thing and every circumstance by which you are surrounded, is exactly the opposite of what you have been led to believe. This was just the present condition of things.

For example, nothing could be more beautiful than the spot upon which we were at the moment: on the right, as we turned out of the gate of the little town on our way to *Velletri*, we catch glimpses of the country over which we passed yesterday. There are olive grounds and vineyards, cornfields, pastures, and buildings in every picturesque shape, scattered about and piled one above another as far back as the eye can reach. Behind you lies the smooth Mediterranean Sea, like a broad mirror reflecting the placid heavens; and as you descend the road, you see the picturesque town mounting up into the sky. The pretty little church invites you to notice, before you turn your back upon it, and the *palazzo Ghigi* presses boldly forward, and insists upon a moment's attention before you depart. On your left you have a luxuriant green wood, deliciously fresh and shady, with cool bright water running in a gurgling stream by the side of you. The only drawback upon all these beauties and enjoyments is, that you must not drink the water if you are ever so thirsty and hot, that you

cannot enjoy the shade of the "cool refreshing wood," because you are obliged to keep the high road. The sky is serene and without a cloud—better for you if it were covered; and the breeze you get from the sea at your back is the gentle *sirocco*, which is wafted over from the *spicy* shores of Africa, which you would be glad to exchange with the bitterest north-easter that ever blew from the icy lungs of the Arctic regions! All you see around you, however beautiful under other circumstances, is now one dead white mass, robbed of its colour and character. The sky is white, and the sea is white, and the trees and the fields, and the mountains and the buildings, are all white, or whity-brown, or any thing but what you would have them be. The butterflies and the lizards are the only moving objects, except the labouring beetle, dressed in his black shirt, rolling along his ball, and fighting against impediments in his way, or against one of his own kind, who may wish to take the labour and the honour of the enterprise out of his hands. The movements of these things appear only an impertinent disturbance of the heat, the dust, and the parched leaves, and you would much rather be left at quiet, and allowed to go to sleep. However, even this is not allowed you—you cannot enjoy any such a luxury without considerable danger. If you go out of the hot sun to sleep in the shade, that terrible demon the *ague fever*, the scourge of Italy, is almost sure to catch you in his accursed grasp: even to sit down in the shade to cool yourself if you are heated, is attended with some slight peril; you may be sure the sly fiend is waiting at no great distance from you, and is every moment insidiously creeping nearer and nearer: woe betide you if he lays his paw upon you; his very proximity may be felt; so that for two or three days after *it is possible* you may have some queer sensations about you, as if you had been in the presence of death. The safer method by far is to keep moving, or to house yourself, and take your *siesta* like a prudent man and an Italian.

Men who agree to travel together seldom, I fancy, agree in any thing else—a fact which was completely verified in the cases of my companion and myself in more particulars than one. This was the very hottest time of the year, not unwholesome, but *stinging* hot; and I now discovered most *satisfactorily* what I had often suspected before, namely, that I had a slight *dash* of the *salamander* in my nature; and that fire, if it was not my proper element, made but little impression upon me. When the reader and myself become better acquainted, I shall be able to put him up to a thing or two touching the economy of his body as well as that of his pocket, his time, and some other matters; and if he be a painter in particular, or a traveller in search of that which to me is the most curious feature of a country—the living manners of its inhabitants—I think I can lay him under some obligations; but of that anon. The condition in which we found ourselves and every thing about us at the moment spoken of, however true to the facts, was exactly that in which no two travellers would desire to be placed, and which no poetical tourist would describe; and

hence the disappointment of trusting to the descriptions of those who, as the Italians say, always coax the dog's coat in the direction of his tail. It is really curious to think what a difference a few hours of time may make in a faithful picture of circumstances.

But let us go on: tremendously hot it is, but, to me, glorious. My companion is as sulky as a bear, or a Westphalian, which he is; the pony as lazy as a *Lazzarone*, and a great deal lazier, since this abused class appears to me the only industrious one at Naples; always ready to work, *except* when they don't like, or have no occasion — which is no proof of idleness, maugre the scandal of travellers.

On leaving *L'Arici* this morning we had a very pretty proof to the contrary of what is so commonly said and thought of the nature and disposition of Italians, namely, that they are *devoid of attachment*. Of course I don't mean that they are not prone to surrender themselves to the tyranny of that master-passion, love, — the most powerful of all attachments, — because history and romance are both full of proofs to the contrary; but I mean that they are said to be deficient in attachment of a social and domestic character, — the which I have abundant reasons to know is, like a great deal more laid to their charge, utterly at variance with the truth. The little incident I shall relate is very unimportant in itself, but to me it was and is a beautiful instance, because *prophetic* of my future experience; and, as far as it went, contradictory of certain impressions I had picked up unfavourable to the people amongst whom it was my lot to be thrown. Well do I remember the remark of a highly intelligent friend, whose own observation and experience had given him the most perfect conception of the state of *art* in Italy, and many facts connected with it, but who had caught the false feeling he displayed from the representations of others. "I scarcely understand," he remarked to me one day, "what your real object is in going to Italy, and I half doubt whether you clearly understand it yourself." Of course I asked his reasons. "Why," he continued, "in all you have done in art, a strong feeling for domestic life, and the peculiar incidents which characterise it, have evidently inspired and guided you. Now, in Italy you will find nothing of this sort, since it is well known that the Italians have properly no *domesticity*." I could only shake my head at this unfavourable prognostic, as I learned afterwards to *shrug* my shoulders, Italian like, at certain notions I heard put forth, about as true and as creditable to England.

During our stay at *Arici*, whenever I saw my companion, which was seldom, he was attended by a funny little fellow of a boy about six years old, with one of those small-featured faces which I always feel an inclination to like, — the skin of which was so tightly drawn over the skull, the forehead, the nose, lips, chin, and jaw, as to give some remote notion of the parched look of a *mummy*, and to suggest the idea of its being too small for its contents, so that the teeth appeared at the opening of the mouth; the end of the nose and the upper lip were drawn tightly together, and the nostrils were dilated into two round openings. On looking at such a face, the ludicrous

idea of a pigtail being tied so tight that the wearer cannot shut his eyes comes immediately into one's thoughts. This little fellow looked at you out of every feature he had, and was the merriest little monkey you would see anywhere. He danced continually round my companion, turned himself, in imitation of the mill sails, on his hands and feet, arms and legs in air, and sang little comic and nonsensical songs with a spirit that was matchless. Never was there such a perfect personification of what one might call a *giggle*; it was impossible to look at him without laughing. His whole figure,—poor little fellow, there is something ludicrous in that word *whole*, which, as applied to him, appears to mean nothing,—a thing so light and fragile that it appeared to be scarcely a part of any body, and so incorporeal that it could not resist even the force of a butterfly; and then his dress, as a whole—but I must not go into the detail of *that* at all events, nor should I be so particular in describing as much of this little creature as I have, but that he interested me very much by the condition, and the sudden and extraordinary change I saw in him the morning we left *Arici*.

We had both mounted the *caratina*, and were moving off rather briskly, so as to make some way before the heat of the *mezzo giorno* (noon) should overtake us, and perhaps we had advanced a couple of miles on our journey: I was listening to an account my companion was giving me of the singular adventures, and wonderful sayings and doings of the people with whom he had spent his time,—when all at once he stopped the little horse, stood up, looking back the road we had come, and exclaimed, with a face filled with surprise and glee, “*accidente! cospetto di Bacco!* there is Tito! *per dio!* how curious! *Diavolo!* what can he want, he is crying; *poverino, maledetto cosa è, what is it?*” He then set up a shout, calling lustily upon little Titus to come on; but whether over-fatigued, or overcome with sorrow, or sulky, or what, did not appear, but, instead of coming forward, *Tito* laid himself down upon the green bank, and covered his face in his hands. My companion made a great many attempts to persuade him to get up and come towards us,—called him *carissimo*, and used many other endearing epithets and argumentatives; he then offered him money, and at last threatened to do that which he immediately put in execution—go on. The instant the wheels were in motion the little fellow set up a cry of distress, and the next moment he was flying like the wind at the tail of the *caratina*. This was a great triumph for my companion, who laughed and flogged the pony with all his might. The chace did not continue long, for the poor little fellow threw himself down upon the road, crying loudly and bitterly. I now thought it time to interfere, and begged my companion to stop and see what was the matter. On approaching this poor little creature, as he lay in the dust upon the road, I really thought him dead, from the extraordinary change that had taken place in his appearance. I had seen him but the day before, looking healthy and lively as a lizard, but he appeared now to have shrunk into half the volume of his former little self, and to be, as my companion expressed it,

*moribondo*, or dying. We lifted him upon his feet, and, in trying to console him, asked, as a matter of course, what was the matter with him. His tears and sobs prevented his answering, but at last we caught enough to make out the sense of what he meant, and found that the cause of all this heavy grief and long travel was that my companion had departed without bidding him good bye. We laughed, of course, and applied plentifully those consolatory admonitions which are current in the world, and which, as they cost nothing, are most liberally bestowed and uselessly applied. We told him he must not cry, and ought not, the one imputing hypocrisy, the other blame; for he could not help it, poor little fellow, and the feeling he exhibited did him credit. However, it was necessary to do one of three things, either to take him with us, stay with him, or leave him. The last was the easiest and inevitable, so we prepared to put it in execution. I have seen and reflected upon sorrow, both in the young and in the old, but I scarcely ever saw such an illustration of it before, certainly never in one so young. We could *not* leave him, it was impossible. We offered him money, it was not noticed; we coaxed, persuaded, threatened, jeered; nothing made the least impression. "Well," said my companion, "we must go you know, Tito; we cannot stay with you." Tito sobbed on. "Will you go with us?" This was the unkindest cut of all; the poor little fellow felt the insult offered to his suffering, and actually writhed and groaned under it: he seemed to have half resigned himself to the loss he had to sustain, but this mockery of his feelings was not to be endured. "*Non fa caso; inutile, per dio,*" (it is of no use) said my companion; "we must go and leave him." "Let us," said I; "but first hear what he says." Putting his ear down towards him, the poor child told my companion, that he was the first person in his life who had ever shown him any kindness, and when he was gone he should lose the only friend he ever had.

This little occurrence, trifling in itself, made a strong impression upon me, and for some hours after we referred to it, and spoke of it in a tone of compassion and feeling. It is an instance of a sudden attachment I have never seen paralleled except once, and that was in a dog! As we jogged on together our ordinary mirth considerably lowered: I learned that Herr von Guzzlewein had taken up his quarters at the house of a widow who sold wine, — I need not say of what sort, — and that the attachment which had been illustrated in so extraordinary a way sprang out of some slight attentions bestowed by the German upon the Italian boy.

## NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS AND READERS.

THE Editor cannot offer this month's Number without apologising for having occupied so many of its pages with what, upon reflection, he can only regard as a stupid controversy. He is desirous to show that in his criticisms upon the cartoons he had but one object — the good of art; and if he has been betrayed in what he has now written into the expression of any feeling more than is essential to that end, he is wrong, and sorry for it; he promises that the like shall not occur in future, and that he will endeavour to make up to his correspondents and readers next month such deficiencies as they may feel to exist in this. As a last word on the subject, he wishes to observe that he has always felt a respect for the Editor of the "Art Union," and the best wishes towards his object and endeavours, and he can but regret that, if his intentions were good in the present instance, the *animus* betrayed was not more worthy of them.

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THE

# ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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## BRITISH AND FOREIGN ART.

"I know of no people since the Greeks, who have indicated a higher promise to equal them in the refinement of the arts than the British Nation; but this can only take place when the whole mass of the people shall be awake to the usefulness of the arts, and the splendour they confer."—The late BENJAMIN WEST, P. R. A.

THE readers of this work cannot fail to have observed, that it is assumed as a fact, and reasoned upon as a conviction, that the state of art at the present day in the nations of the Continent generally is considered as *INFERIOR* to its condition in this country—that it has been less successfully cultivated, and is consequently less far advanced towards perfection.

It is earnestly desired, that the reader should obtain a clear and distinct understanding of the writer's meaning in the treatment of a subject which involves so many difficulties, and that he should put a liberal construction upon what is offered, and take the tone of his impression rather from the context than from any particular turns of expression which may happen or appear to clash with each other, or to be at variance with the leading proposition, or not fully borne out by the facts adduced.

In asserting that art has been more successfully cultivated, and farther advanced in England than elsewhere, it is to be observed, that no particular style or branch of art is indicated; but at the same time it will be clearly understood that a *something* which combines in it excellences of a superior order, or that make up collectively a sum of greater amount than is found elsewhere, has been attained to, by the energies and talents of British Artists. Let us suppose, that this something contains the essence, the vitality, the living principle, the soul to which Art is indebted for its very being.

It is not necessary at this stage of the inquiry to stop to investigate the nature, and to explain the elements of which this soul is made up. Let us call it the

### ARTISTIC POWER.

The reader will of course perceive that there are two grand means by which all the various excellences of Art are called into existence, and



which depend for their productions upon the exercise of two grand powers, faculties, or endowments (do not let us quibble about words), in the operator, the which may be denominated the

#### MENTAL AND MANUAL.

It is an admission which will be readily made, that these two powers may exist — we cannot say separately, but nearly in that condition, and also that they will be found combined in every degree of proportion and relation. Let us suppose them divided sufficiently to call them separate powers, and that the artistic power is made up of some combination of the two. In supposing them separate, we have the intelligent power on one hand, and the operative power on the other; supposing these powers combined in an inferior degree, an inferior artist is the result, combined in the fullest degree, an artist of the highest order is indicated.

In assuming the superiority of English Art, we lay claim to the possession of the largest proportion of each of these two qualifications, or to the largest quantity of artistic power.

Having made clear and unequivocal the assertion, it behoves us to go to the proof.

First, what does artistic power consist in? and next, where, are the evidences that we are possessed of it?

In prosecuting the inquiry before us, it is not deemed essential to resort to those high examples of art, whose peculiar claims to superiority, depending upon some speculative nicety, it is difficult to understand and admit. If an investigator will insist and attempt to prove that a certain work contains all the artistic excellences that are known to exist in the world of Art, he may very possibly meet with opponents who will give him some trouble: but if one will show that such excellences are the proper attributes of Art, and that the Art which contains most of them is of the highest order, demanding the highest qualifications in the operator, and affording the highest order of enjoyment, by its influence and effect, nobody will dispute the point with him. Examples of the excellence in question must necessarily be drawn from real existing and known works, and that such works possess such excellences will rest upon human authority; there is no other; but it will be the most secure of all authority, the general voice of mankind.

Now it is my particular wish and object to keep clear of that course of argument and illustration, in which difficulties are sure to arise, and to take those plain and common-sense examples which both the reader and the writer will find no difficulty in managing and comprehending, and in which it is the least likely to become entangled and bewildered.

In turning to the records of memory for what I have seen of the productions of modern Art upon the Continent generally, I find the most unfavourable impression left upon my recollections and feelings associated with the attempts I have seen in PORTRAITURE. It

is by comparing these attempts with our own that I am led to the conclusion, as well as to the proof by this branch of the Art, that the quantity of artistic power is greater in England than in the nations of the Continent.

Why I have chosen to illustrate what I have undertaken to prove by a reference to portrait painting is, that this branch of Art readily affords the required examples, is generally better understood than any other, and is in its exercise capable of being elevated to a high order of Art, or reduced to a low one. It is a branch of Art by which any portion of artistic power may be tested and exemplified, and made the vehicle either of the mental or the manual powers of the Artist.

That this mode of testing the comparative state of artistic power in England and upon the Continent may be objected to, I am quite prepared for; but I hope I shall show that a better could not be adopted, because there are full as many objections opposed to every other.

It is curious to observe how certain objections which appear formidable, and almost fatal to a comparison of continental with native Art, are passed over, not only by observers in general, but by the Artist and the connoisseur. Almost every person who has the slightest knowledge of Art, on viewing what is achieved abroad, is at once ready to admit, that in portraiture foreign Artists are without any reasonable pretensions. In the same breath, however, in which this fact is admitted, there follows an exception — a but, which is the prelude to admitting them to the highest honours of Art. You will immediately hear it remarked, they certainly are very inferior portrait painters but — they are far superior to us in history. Having arrived at this conclusion, the mind has found a resting place from which it is not disturbed by any considerations, as to why they do not succeed as portrait painters, nor by an examination as to how far they have gone as historical painters; it is all swallowed up in the bare fact of their being painters of history — aspirants to the highest honours of Art. Devoid of the necessary information, and under the influence of a delusive impression, it will not strike such people, nor will the mere mention of the fact convince them that the great difference which exists between the English and the foreign artist is that the first neglects, and the last *attempts* history. It is to the attempt that the honour and the superiority is conceded, what is achieved, few indeed are in a condition to judge.

It is our business here to investigate this claim of superiority, not on the plea of what is attempted in historic Art, but what is achieved.

It is hoped that the reader will admit the possibility of estimating what is done in art, and in every branch of its practice, by a method which collects and combines particulars, and that gives the amount in one gross sum under the designation of artistic power. It is not intended to pursue such a course of reasoning, and such a method of calculation as takes account of a host of petty excellences in all the varieties in which Art can show itself, and declare that so many of

these are equal or superior to the highest order of things known. Nothing of the sort is intended; by artistic power is meant a capability which extends over a wide space in the territory of art, and which may include in its grasp objects and attributes of the noblest as well as the inferior order.

Where comparisons are attempted, there must of necessity be the means of comparison afforded, that is to say, the objects that will admit of being compared the one with the other. It would be of little use, therefore, to test the Art of the Continent with that of England, by comparing examples in historical painting, since that branch of art is practised in one country and not in the other; but the power requisite for historic Art may be compared by taking examples which are capable of exhibiting it. It is this which is attempted, and which it is hoped the farther prosecution of the subject will clearly illustrate.

As has been observed, there is nothing which exhibits the weakness and inefficiency of foreign Art more than the attempts which are made in portraiture.

Foreign portraits are exactly such productions as rude and uncultivated Artists produce, and as an unformed and ordinary taste appreciates and approves. Every person of the least intelligence in Art knows that a portrait should be something more than a mere transcript or copy of the man — something more than a matter of eyes, nose, and mouth, the tint of his skin, the colour of his hair, and his eyes, the shape of his person, and the cut of his coat.

A portrait to be good must be something more than a mere matter of fact resemblance; if it is not, however much *like* the person it may be, it is still but a very common-place production.

Now the portraits of foreign Artists are made up of mere imitation and trite resemblances. Whatever in the model is most strikingly marked, most coarse, and most easy to represent, is rendered with vulgar truth; and what you cannot miss seeing is pressed most impertinently upon your observation, while that which it is desirous to hide is left to take its chance. These Artists appear to trust entirely to the mere mimicry of Art, to depend solely upon the power of imitating what is seen. What is achieved looks as if it had been executed for the first time with the uncertainty of an untried attempt, and not at all as if it were the result of something long known, often tried, and well understood. These are some of the characteristics of foreign Art in this branch of it.

It is admitted that portraiture in this country is in advance of that of all others; but, at the same time, by a partial consideration of the subject, which gives a false character to the inquiry, portrait painting is ranked as an inferior branch of Art, so that our superiority is valued at a low rate. Now it is not difficult to show that this superiority is an evidence of our greater advance in Art, or of the possession of a greater quantity of artistic power than any other country can lay

claim to; and the illustration of this consists in understanding perfectly the nature of that excellence which we are allowed to possess.

All the nations of the world paint portraits; why are they unable to give them that excellence which we confer upon ours? The answer has already been given—The artistic power necessary is wanting.

Our superiority in portraiture is admitted, but portraiture is an inferior branch of Art.

Now let us look into the philosophy of this, and we shall see, I think, how it is to be explained and understood.

This superiority consists in *something*. It does very well for ordinary purposes to call the *something* we possess *superiority*, simply without giving it any better definition; but does not this superiority consist in something which it is possible to define, and distinguish by terms that have a clear and distinct meaning? Now, in order to come at once to the matter, it is asserted that our superiority consists in giving to our portraits a look of *life and intelligence*. Whether borne out by the fact or not, we have here, at least, an idea clear, definite, and mentally tangible, which we can handle and talk about, instead of a vague or general designation.

Other nations fail to invest portraiture with *the* excellence which marks and distinguishes ours. But, at the same time, they practise a higher order of Art than portraiture, and lay claim, consequently, to a higher order of merit.

In this highest order of Art, deities and mortals are represented, and creatures divine and human are made to act under the influence of motives and impulses; and although life and intelligence very naturally form an indispensable part of these, yet such qualities are never apparent in any such representations.

Now it remains to be looked into how this happens. There is, we know, a theory which would set aside the necessity of endowing human forms with human attributes; that deities and exalted mortals are or maybe so far removed above ordinary mortals and the common conditions of humanity, that although they are made actors and participators in scenes and events which are the offspring of motives and passions, their expression need not exhibit any traces of such passions. It is to avoid running foul, and becoming entangled in a theory of this sort, that I have chosen to illustrate what it is intended to prove, by familiar and easy examples. It appears to require no proof, that if an Artist undertakes to represent creatures endowed with life and intelligence, that there ought, as a matter of course, to be full evidence of both, and that the absence of such important qualities is not to be accounted for by telling you that such creatures are not real, but imaginary. There are only two ways of explaining such a matter; the one is, that these qualities are rejected by a theory, or that they are not present from an inability to represent them.

But we will suppose, for argument-sake, that the practice of the

Continent in omitting these qualities, in a way evidenced by the fact, is the result, and is justifiable upon the authority, of a theory; let that pass, and it then comes to be inquired into why *these same qualities are never to be found in objects to which they are not only proper, but indispensable?*

But we will proceed.

We sometimes talk of new creations, fanciful existences, from which we attempt to abstract the attributes of the old and real: these may serve the purpose of the poet, but the moment they come to be employed by the painter their impracticable character is detected. If a scene from the mythology, from Scripture, or from history, be made the subject of a picture, we cannot conceive how such a one can be treated by the painter without employing the representation of characteristics which belong to life and intelligence, and yet we see subjects treated by painters in which neither of these appear.

It is often found in a work that there is correct drawing, just proportion, good composition, and varied action, with appropriate colour and effect. These are excellences, and of these there may be a sufficiency to give such a work importance, but still of life and intelligence — nothing.

If you testify any surprise at the absence of such important matters, you will be told, perhaps, that the painter does not mean to be natural and common, but that he wishes to create a superior order of creature — a kind of poetic abstraction. Now you are to take especial care that you are not misled here, because this is the grand and most important object of Artists every where. You will perhaps at once take up an idea that foreign Artists attempt this, and that English Artists neglect it, or that one acts under the guidance of such a theory, and that the other does not. Let it be understood that both and all profess to have this object in view, so that as far as mere profession goes one is justly entitled to the merit of aiming at so great an end as the other. You will see that their modes of operation are different, and be able to decide which is the best. But you will feel, perhaps, that what is presented to you is much below the standard of your every-day perceptions and reminiscences, and that the whole work would gain in character and consequence if it possessed something more of what you have frequently observed in mere portraits and familiar representations.

There is still the theory to justify the absence of them; and if you can be blinded by *that*, you will still keep your eyes open to the non-appearance of them where they constitute the character and the very essence and being of the objects to which they properly belong.

As life and intelligence are, then, to be considered but as attributes of an inferior branch of Art, it follows, as a matter of course, that they are comparatively of easy acquirement; and it will be so much the more a matter of surprise that they are found in none of the various productions of Art, but that all alike are divested of them; neither in the examples of high Art nor in portraiture are they to be met with. They are neither created by accident nor design. They are qualities

which suit no class of Art, and are either above or below the consideration of Artists! There is but one true explanation of this mystery: these *unemployed* qualities, the proper attributes of real and highly cultivated Art, the evidence of artistic power, are beyond the sphere of advancement and the present capabilities of the Artists!

Here let us introduce a few words farther, explanatory of the nature of that excellence which is claimed for British Art, and afterwards offer a remark upon the propriety of the claim itself.

The excellence spoken of "may be illustrated" by supposing two Artists, each possessed of different powers, jointly employed on the same work. We will suppose one deeply learned in all that is beautiful and perfect in form and character—that he has studied, measured, and compared the best of all that is good in a multitude of examples, and is capable of combining all in one specimen. We will suppose his work a deity, or a mortal of the highest order; that the character of his forms combines all the known excellences, that their action is dignified, their air noble, their shape perfect, their features beautiful. His work may contain all these, and still want *something*, and the want of which may render it comparatively but a very imperfect production. It may want *that* which is most rare and valuable in Art, most difficult to find and to give—it may want a look of life and intelligence—it may want that which has often been given to the portrait of an ordinary individual, and one perhaps who boasts neither shape nor feature.

Continuing the supposition, the first Artist having done all he can achieve, we will call in the assistance of the other. The first has completed his task, and is perhaps being carried in triumph by his countrymen with a crown of laurels surrounding his head, which, indeed, he merits. We might go to all the countries on earth in search of an Artist capable of completing what is so nobly begun, and we should not find in the whole so many as England could produce. The talent required for perfecting the work we have imagined is to be found only at home! The Promethean fire which alone can give the vital principle to this beautiful creation, which can make it live, and breathe, and think, and confer upon it the true stamp and character of nature's work, is possessed by many an English Artist and humble portrait painter, but is almost unknown in the present day among the Artists of the Continent.

If English Art has really any just claims to so high an excellence as this spoken of, it is very natural to inquire in what way it became possessed of it, and whether it is the result of education, or the offspring of natural powers and endowments—an acquirement or a gift of nature. If it be the consequence of education, it shows at least that a very different system is pursued in this country as regards the profession, to that adopted in others; and if it is to be considered purely as a natural gift, it shows a partiality in nature, which is in no way rationally to be accounted for.

Now it is not to be supposed or supported that men having a bias

and a fitting organisation for any particular branch of the Art are born *exclusively* in England, France, Germany, or any other country; it is far more rational to think and to believe that there is something in the mode of study and the practice of pursuing Art which tends to the creation of the thing in question.

It must be admitted that great difficulties attend the attempt to explain and make clear the *rationale* of these peculiar results of study, from considering the mode which is pursued in this country, and which is generally considered inferior to that of others, since the supposed advantages of a settled and well recognised system are not found in it, and yet it is productive of results which look like the effects of natural endowments, over which rules and principles are supposed to exercise but very little control.

The exercise of Art in this country is not put under the guidance of the canons of the schools, or conducted in conformity with any of the learned authorities and deductions! Considering this, it appears surprising that it does not dwindle and die of inanition: it is still more astonishing that it survives, can assert its independence, and even its superiority.

In another part of this treatise we shall attempt to explain this difficulty; for the present we may proceed.

It is not assumed for the English Artist that *he* only attempts the difficult task of elevating the character of ordinary objects. It is undertaken by all, and is far less insisted upon in theory in this country than in any other. There is, however, a wide difference in the mode pursued as well as the results. In this particular, as in most others, the English Artist appears to proceed without the guidance of principle, and in ignorance or disregard of many of the most favourite doctrines and dogmas, and to trust to feeling for the production of the excellence spoken of, or to the laws, rules, and principles he provides for himself.

The grand and master result of his efforts mentally and manually — perhaps the deserved reward of his independence in both — is the excellence which has been described, and a larger portion of artistic strength than is found to attach to his brethren generally in any part of the world — this is the power of conferring upon his productions a look of life and intelligence.

Before closing this article, a word more may be said on the nature of this claim, which will certainly admit of dispute. It may be denied that English portraits excel in these characteristics; it may be said that they are peculiarly excellent in some others. What are they? It may be said that they excel in the colour, being true to nature in the round and fleshy representation of the reality, in the texture of the materials imitated, or in the general treatment, which give a pleasing character as a whole. But none of these qualities are capable of conferring a high character upon portraiture, or of giving it a claim to pre-eminence — a claim which is conceded to us. These are only the qualities of ordinary portraits, and if these were

sufficient to entitle English portraiture to superiority, that superiority might be claimed, by the same rule, for the productions of every other branch of Art, and thus all would be superior. The merit and the claim rest only in that or those qualities which alone can give excellence to such works, and which may be designated by a look of life and intelligence. There is, indeed, nothing else which can give superiority to portraits. To be "like," as we term it, is something; to represent the features and the person of the specific individual is something; to be so true to the character of the person as to convey a correct idea of the colour of the hair, the tint of the skin, the general air and habitual look and expression, is something. But, nevertheless, these several traits are all ordinary matters, within the reach of common artists, and the result of mere imitation. There is that, still, which goes infinitely beyond this achievement; but that is possible only to men of superior powers, and perceptible only to the eyes of taste. This is a look of life and intelligence. Nothing else can give a character of superiority to portraiture, or entitle the painter of portraits to an honourable distinction.

It is a common remark that portraits are always made better looking than the persons from whom they are painted. The individual is generally improved upon by the painter. This emendation goes under the name of flattery, and may be regarded, if not as the first step — a false one perhaps — at least as the first indication of a movement towards the excellency which we contemplate and recognise under the term beau-ideal, or exaltation of character.

The exercise of this "flattery," in ordinary hands, is marked with characteristics gross and vulgar enough, and consists merely of *material* emendations. If the sitter's eyebrows cross the top of his nose, it is very easy to leave a gap between them: if his eyes look contrary ways, it is easy to set them to rights: if his nose turn up, it is easy to straighten it: if his mouth be too wide, it can be retrenched: if his cheeks bag and hang loose, the cravat can be made to cover them; his hair can be curled, and his skin can be smoothed, and the colour freshened: if the eye be dull and heavy, putting an extra touch of white into it will brighten it up: if the expression be morose and sour, turning up the corners of the mouth in portraits is the sure and conventional sign of amiability and sweetness: if the character be vulgar, the coat, the cravat, the hair, and a ring on the *little* finger, will remedy that evil, and prove that the tailor, the washerwoman, the barber, and the jeweller, are as important to gentility as the Artist himself. To give a vulgar person a genteel look is something; but to give the true air of gentility, and to make a gentleman look like a gentleman, is something more: yet, however lowly this ability may rank in comparison with that of a more exalted character, we might defy the whole Continent to produce an example of it.

"Mending nature" is common cant amongst Artists, particularly those of the Continent: yet who has ever seen a good subject come from their hands, even as a portrait, without having undergone a de-



gree of debasement, and in every attempt at the representation of abstract and ideal forms and characters, who has not always observed them tainted with the personal peculiarities of the model from which they were copied?

It is the *elevation of the subject*, the correction of the ordinary examples of nature by the perfect, that gives the first impulse of exaltation to Art. It is the foundation upon which the whole superstructure is to be reared. What shall be said of the condition of Art where the groundwork itself is wanting. If an Artist cannot do justice to an inferior object of Art, what can he do with the highest? It is absurd to *vapour* about historical painting when it has nothing but the *subject* and the *attempt* to recommend it, and when it is devoid of those excellences—that artistic strength, which is to be found in humble portraiture.

It is from these facts that the arguments and conclusions in favour of English Art are deduced, and upon the *truth* of them that the claims put forth will be conceded or denied.

And here, perhaps, it will be asked, for the question involves the clear understanding of the subject, *How is it to be accounted for that British Art, possessed of such superiority, does not claim and obtain the first consideration and the highest honours conceded to Art?* The answer is a short and a plain one—BECAUSE IT IS ONLY EMPLOYED UPON SUBJECTS OF AN UNWORTHY AND INFERIOR CHARACTER!

After all that is claimed for the most learned and comprehensive theory, and all that can be taught and understood by it, it may be fearlessly asserted that the power of rendering nature faithfully, if taken in the right sense, is not only the proper, but the noblest attribute of the Artist and the greatest difficulty of Art. An Artist who can paint up to what is commonly seen is no mean operator, and he who can represent what it is *possible* to find is one of the highest order.

It is a fallacy springing out of the misconception of this comprehensive truth which misleads, baffles, and defeats the operations of the continental Artist; he adopts that course of study to which the one he neglects *leads*, and ought to be regarded as a means, and by neglecting the means he never reaches the end.

The noblest conceptions and the sublimest thoughts are futile and abortive where the means are wanted by which they can be communicated. He, therefore, who aspires after the thoughts, is bound, as a matter of course, to study the language in which alone they can be made intelligible. Now this is exactly the thing which is done by the foreign Artist: I do not assert that he thinks to better purpose than the native; on the contrary, I deny that he does, but he adopts subjects which demand thought, and then leaves the means unstudied by which alone thought can be made available. On the contrary, the native Artist devotes himself entirely to the cultivation of this language; he studies to perfect the means, apparently without ever thinking of the end; and, in their application, he appears re-

gardless on what object he shall bestow or waste his powers. With us great capabilities are given to objects unworthy of them. With foreign Artists the noblest objects are treated by powers feeble and unformed, and attempted by means utterly incompetent to the end.

The reader is earnestly requested to observe, that while this superiority in the state of Art is claimed for the Artists of England, an *incapacity* in the Artists of other countries is by no means indicated or asserted. On the contrary, as regards individuals, the writer has known many of first-rate talent; and, as regards the mass, he has a full conviction that there is a pretty equal sprinkling of men of genius all over the civilised world, and that their being successful, prominent, or great, is the effect of circumstances over which it is quite possible they may have no control.

### AN EVENING'S GOSSIP WITH A PAINTER.

Scene, *A Painter's Studio*.—Time, *Evening, between light and dark*.  
*Easels, canvasses, frames, stretchers, portfolios, books, papers, costumes, and other lumber, scattered about in the happiest state of picturesque confusion*.—PALETTE the painter is seen musing over the ruddy embers of a low fire, his feet upon the fender, and balancing himself upon the hinder legs of his chair. He is suddenly startled by a loud knocking at the door, and awaking from his trance, he cries out, "*Chi è? entrate! favorisca!*" At this moment, a short stout bustling little figure of a man makes his way into the dark room, thumps with his stick, and cries halloo, who's at home? what jargon is this I hear? Palette, where are you? The painter advances to meet the stranger, and greets him in this way:—

AH! Chatworthy, my good old friend, how do you do, and how have you been for an age past.

[*Chatworthy shakes hands with the painter, and exclaims,*

Zounds! Palette, now I hear you speak, I know it is you; is any body else here? what lingo is that I heard at the door? I have known some gentlemen affect to forget, not only their friends, but their mother tongue into the bargain, after a few years' absence; it is not your case, is it?

Pal. O no, my old friend, I had only forgotten myself, and was fancying I was still in Italy, and sitting over a fire of vine stalks.

Chat. Which burn better than vulgar coal, no doubt. Well, come get us a light, and let us see what changes four years have made in you. You have let your beard and mustachios grow, no doubt, and your hair dangles, à la Raphael, over the collar of your coat; for I understand it is impossible to paint at *Room* without it: better cut it, and make it into brushes, as Byron said, and paint like Raphael.

Come, light your lamp, if you can bear the smell of fish oil, and I suppose you have not imported a ship load of olive for home consumption!

*Pal.* The same man you ever were, Chatty, funny and sarcastic.

*Chat.* Faith, I hope, I shall find you as little changed.

[*The lamp is lighted, and the visiter, staring with a look of mimic wonder, exclaims,*

Prodigious! zounds! why I see no change in you at all; the same man, by all that is marvellous. Four years in the sunny climes of Italy, the home of the fine arts, the land of song, the paradise of the poets, the painters, the fiddlers, sages, and sight seers, and no change—marvellous! But, of course, you are returned with a sufficient contempt for every thing English, no doubt of that. We know nothing of bright suns, blue skies, clear waters, balmy airs, zephyrs, flowers, beautiful women, sculpture, painting, music, and so on; we know nothing of such things in England; do we, Palette? Look with compassion upon our forlorn condition, I beg!

*Pal.* Sit down, sit down, you mischievous joker, and I'll get you some coffee.

*Chat.* Well, Palette, seriously I shan't like you, if I find you have improved even your taste at the expense of your patriotism.

*Pal.* O, no fear of that, Chatty; a man who really understands what Art is at home is sure to mend his patriotism by going abroad.

*Chat.* Why, Palette, you won't tell us that painting is better understood in England than in Italy, France, and Germany?

*Pal.* I have not the least hesitation in saying that it is; and I should not mind going a step farther, and make proclamation, and to maintain it against all comers, that the *best part* of what is done in England is that which is most difficult to achieve in Art.

*Chat.* Prodigious and paradoxical!

*Pal.* All concentrated truths are paradoxes to ——

*Chat.* The vulgar, you were going to say.

*Pal.* To the uninformed is a more gentle phrase.

*Chat.* You speak of the present state of Art, and not the past? You don't mean to say that those fine old fellows who drew inspiration from heaven, and the forms of men, women, and children from their own souls, were not infinitely your superiors?

*Pal.* In some things we are theirs.

*Chat.* I am perfectly astonished, Palette; would it be possible to make a plain man understand them?

*Pal.* Far easier than to make a prejudiced one believe them.

*Chat.* Well, Palette, I must say that I have always regarded Art as the *pons assinorum* of general intelligence and acquirement. A man may learn something of every thing else, languages, history, science, and so on; but it has always appeared to me that he must be born, not only for the exercise of painting and sculpture, but for the comprehension of them also.

*Pal.* Yes; and hence the idea, I suppose, that taste is intuitive:

since so many affect to understand them, they must have some plea for the assumption.

*Chat.* When one reflects upon the thing, it must be seen that the means employed for the inculcation of a knowledge of Art in early life are mighty slender. I learnt drawing at school, I remember, and I fancy I cut a very respectable figure among the *chaps* that partook of that elegant *accomplishment*; but since that hour I have never had a pencil in my hand, or read one word on the subject, except now and then a critique in the newspapers.

*Pal.* You are in the condition of too many well intentioned, and otherwise intelligent people; and as somebody said when it was told him, that Rousseau knew nothing of grammar, So much the worse for grammar; so I say, So much the worse for Art.

*Chat.* Well, Palette, now you are turned author and editor, you will soon set these things right, no doubt: in twelve months the world of taste will be quite another thing.

*Pal.* The attempt to mend it has its pleasures, if it has no other advantages, so that something is gained.

*Chat.* Beside the labour and the penalties. I observe in your address to the reader, you denominate yourself a literary Robinson Crusoe. There is a certain hero of romance famous for exploits of a marvellous character, whose name it strikes me would be much more appropriate.

*Pal.* Who had a certain squire of about your stature.

*Chat.* Who every now and then gave good advice, which of course was thrown away upon the gentleman who was brave and considerate enough to attack windmills, and who was rewarded with *the pleasure of making the attempt*, and — the consequences too. I don't wish to alarm you, Palette, by the remark; but it strikes me, apart from all other dangers, that you put yourself in peril by the mere mention of the evil you are endeavouring to mend, to say nothing of the pains and penalties to which you subject yourself in contending with the evil itself. You may take my word for it, Palette, that people can't bear to be told of their ignorance. You may tell them they are wicked, that they are heirs to a thousand vices and a thousand diseases, but you must not tell them they are ignorant or even uninformed. You will say there is a good excuse for them in the absence of every means of information — that is not enough; there are people who possess the required information, and where one gets it, another might obtain it, so that blame is imputed.

*Pal.* That is not quite a fair mode of reasoning, when the acquirement depends upon *chance*; now it is, that so important an acquirement as the knowledge of Art depends upon chance, that I complain at all, and the deficiencies I lament are the consequences. I have some friends who argue as you do: my experience proves the converse of your proposition most clearly and satisfactorily. Habit, perhaps, has led to the assumption of taste pretty generally, but if there be

one subject on which people in the ordinary way speak of their own pretensions with peculiar modesty it is the Arts.

*Chat.* It must be in the presence of those whom they know are well acquainted with the subject.

*Pal.* Unquestionably it would be of little use to lower their pretensions where the merit of so doing would appear a defect; and if there is nothing to encourage people in such a situation, there is nothing to deter them from making a display to which they feel themselves as much entitled as others — they are not even tempted so to do by the chance of learning, or the opportunity of teaching. I consider, Chatworthy, that if I have any chance of advancing the object I have in view, it is from an appeal to this very quality in the public which you appear to think I shall stir and rouse in array against me. It is upon this tractable and unpretending virtue in the public that I raise my hopes. I do not come to impute blame, but if I can to impart information, and not put myself forward as one who has a right to lecture, dogmatise, or admonish, but I offer my services as one who has had an *opportunity* of learning the something I desire to teach. I come like a pedler simply to display my wares. I don't insist upon people's taking them; and if I use a word to set off their value and importance, I look upon that as a matter all fair in trade. I don't warrant them as my own manufacture, and swear there are none like them, I rather present them as articles upon which the world has set a sort of value, and rated as legitimately good and useful matters of traffic. I know perfectly well that the world is too busy to come about me in crowds, and carry off my whole stock "at one fell swoop." If I am lucky enough to catch a stray customer now and then, who feels disposed to possess what I have to offer, it will be as much as I expect; and if there be any feelings in the public which will lead them to my stall, multiply the number, and tempt them to buy, it will be those I have already mentioned.

*Chat.* I am quite of your opinion, that much is to be expected from the sheer good sense of the public.

*Pal.* Every thing; the most important results to Art have already come from that source, and far more will follow. Art has grown and been sustained by it, and whenever a thorough reformation amongst Artists begin, we shall owe it to the public.

*Chat.* I certainly think, Palette, and with proper respect for the craft, that the public are far more likely to mend than the painters; for if there be any thing wrong, any vicious appetite, or false taste in the public, a sufficient number of people will always be found ready to take advantage of it, and without regarding the consequences, seek to turn it to their own advantage.

*Pal.* No doubt of it; it is a crying evil in Art, as well as in most other pursuits, that very indifferent people belong to it. And the next to these, in my estimation, are those tame, quiet good folks, who are content to take things just as they are, and to leave them just as

they found them, without even making one effort to rouse or excite inquiry into their condition.

*Chat.* Allowing to themselves a pretty liberal quantum of grumbling, in which their spleen and energies evaporate together. I must say it has often struck me as singular, that considering how much good feeling for Art exists, and how general is the liking for its production, so little should have been done by Artists to turn it to account; it appears to me good material to work upon.

*Pal.* It is that sort of material to which, as I have said, Art is indebted *for every thing*. It is this same good feeling and good sense in the public to which I address myself, and through which I hope the public *will* see what good may be done to the cause of Art, by adding knowledge to the good feeling that exists.

*Chat.* Then you think it is to this good feeling in society, rather than to the influence of taste, or any other influence, that Art is indebted for its success, and present advanced condition.

*Pal.* Most certainly, this kindly feeling allied with a natural and unsophisticated taste. Little as may be thought of the influence of these two unpretending faculties, I regard them as the best friends and allies of Art, without the aid of which, it would be at this hour in the same condition it was fifty years ago. The first important movement in favour of Art is to make it FRIENDS, the next, to make it PATRONS, and the next, to create men of TASTE: these three grand measures comprise all that it is possible to do for Art, all that ever has been done, and all that is required, to lift it to the highest pinnacle of excellence it has ever or can ever attain. I also regard these two humble agents of great importance in advancing Art, as guides to what is good, and checks upon what is the bad, feeble, and false.

*Chat.* Of more consequence than criticism itself.

*Pal.* Most certainly; for the strength of criticism is clearly derived from the achievements of Art, is subsequent and not anterior to them. The critic, whatever he may be in other respects as to his acquirements, is but a very inferior Artist indeed as to Art. Depend upon it, Chatworthy, it is by good feeling and encouragement that every thing has been done — by the influence of taste nothing.

*Chat.* I do not know how you manage to separate criticism and taste.

*Pal.* And you will be surprised when I tell you, I regard taste as little else but as another name for the knowledge of the Artist.

*Chat.* And criticism?

*Pal.* As little else but the affectation of that knowledge.

*Chat.* Well, Palette, I must say, I am not quite prepared for the full admission of these definitions and distinctions, although I do not mean to deny the fact, as a matter of probability, that the study of a thing leads commonly to some acquaintance with it.

*Pal.* You are exceedingly liberal and obliging.

*Chat.* Painters ought to be careful how they fall out with the critics, and to remember that criticism, however you may define it, is *the art of finding fault*. I observe, Palette, you have already fallen out with

one of the fraternity about the Cartoons; but from what I observe in the last month's number, you are in a fair way to be reconciled, for he is clearly coming round to your opinion.

*Pal.* O yes; by the way that is rather a curious matter. My friend of the Art Union Journal has rather outdone himself in his last month's number. After all the outrageous praise he has bestowed upon the Cartoons lately exhibited in Westminster Hall — "the worthiest exhibition that ever took place within the walls of any building in England," metropolitan and provincial! a trial of skill "which has been ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY;" an exhibition, in the merits of which "the connoisseur, the critic, and the public all concur;" "a collection of which the country may be so justly proud;" a collection "upon which Her most gracious Majesty is (first) congratulated," "next the commission," "next the country," and above all, "Prince Albert, whose high hopes," &c. After all this and a great deal more, my worthy brother begins to exhibit signs of that grace which my correspondent of last month's Magazine indicated an unworthy suspicion would never take place. It is sadly amusing to see into what straights a man gets who writes without any knowledge of his subject, and perhaps as little sincerity, and what a wretched figure he cuts in his attempts to get out of them. Witness the following; bad begins, but worse remains behind: — "The Cartoons have reflected the *highest* credit on the talents of their producers; they have established the proof that the *power to excel*" (put into italics as is here given) "in the highest department of the *Arts* is assuredly with British artists; but we must enter our protest against considering this *first* attempt as an attempt by which we desire judgment to be formed concerning our ability as a nation to answer a national call, on the same principle that we should have deeply lamented" (what earnestness!) "to find the Royal Commissioners selecting the competitors to do the actual work of embellishing the houses of parliament *without further trial*."

*Chat.* After the first had turned out ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY.

*Pal.* "So do we regret that a work is to appear (engravings of the Cartoons) and to go far in stamping our national character."

*Chat.* It is to be hoped that Dr. Merz won't get hold of it.

*Pal.* "Formed of the earliest efforts of artists in a new style; when we know that in a year or two."

*Chat.* One year? how quickly repentance follows upon the heels of crime.

*Pal.* "These artists or others."

*Chat.* Yes, if they don't others will. The characters of the critic and the prophet happily combined.

*Pal.* "Will, of a surety, produce works *far* more worthy of the age and country, and *infinitely* more honourable to themselves. Nay, we do not entertain a doubt that every one of the eleven will, within the next three years, *be heartily ashamed to look at a copy of the work that bears the date of 1843!!!*"

*Chat.* Really as many notes of admiration as would reach from the

publisher's in Fleet Street to the Rosery at Old Brompton are insufficient to express the wonder and the admiration, too, which the *eleven* gentlemen must feel when reflecting upon the *handsome* encomiums passed upon them but two short months before, and the announcement conveyed in this remark, coupled as it is with the prophetic and startling warning, that if they don't bestir themselves and do something better, "*others*" will—an occurrence, by the way, not at all unlikely.

*Pal.* It is farther observed that "the *evil* is not to end with the production of the eleven prize Cartoons," but "the ten" which also obtain "awards" upon "other considerations than those of actual merit" are to be engraved, and a "few that obtained no prize of any sort are to be mixed up with them." So that out of the "worthiest exhibition that ever took place within the walls of any building in England," a trial of British skill "entirely satisfactory," an exhibition, a "collection upon which the country may be justly proud"—"upon which Her most gracious Majesty is first congratulated," "and, above all, Prince Albert, whose high hopes," &c., there are, at least, twenty-one, and "a few" over, of which in three years the perpetrators will be *heartily* ashamed. A precious exhibition this worthiest must have been, when twenty-one of the *best* works, and "a few" over, are so bad that their authors will have cause, in so short a time, to be ashamed of them. Unhappy gentlemen, if I were not one of you, I should offer some lamentations over your forlorn condition! The Jew at Rome, they say, won't pass under the arch of Constantine, upon which is pictured the spoils taken from their dishonoured temples in the Holy Land. No doubt you will regard with like horror the memorials of your shame assigned to the keeping of the year 1843. You can't get an act of parliament for the establishment of a new era, or get this blotted out of the calendar; but when the period of your regeneration and repentance comes, each of you should appear in sack-cloth and ashes, and severally put on masks in order to hide your blushes. No doubt the critics who have applauded your misdoings will not be behind you in the grace you exhibit, but will repent and mark the period with some signal act of penance.

*Chat.* O, no doubt of it, and the Humane Society will be called, and *drags* will be got ready at all the bridges, at the Serpentine and the New River, and a grave will be dug in the crossways, with a stake and mallet beside it, for the appropriate disposal of the Editor of the Art Union newspaper.

*Pal.* Thank you for helping me out, Chatty: do you observe among the "Varieties" in this journal one of an amusing character, headed "Artist Judges?" It is a good example of ignorance, editorial lying, pointless satire, and witless blundering. It runs thus:—"We have reason to know that it was seriously considered and discussed among the members composing the 'Royal Commission of Fine Arts' to permit the Artist-exhibitors to award the prizes offered, that is to say, to *determine among themselves* who were best entitled to the pre-



*miums.* The commissioners were not *quite* prepared to adopt this plan; its novelty startled them, and although not without considerable hesitation, the proposal was withdrawn." Now if any thing at all is meant by this senseless lampoon, or somebody, or something, it is, that a proposal so preposterous was enough, not that it ever was offered, or seriously discussed, or reluctantly relinquished, to alarm any sensible set of men by its novelty and its absurdity. The judges, if they think such a thing at all worth their notice, will consider themselves highly complimented to have their brains tested, their understanding represented, and their thoughts uttered by such an organ as the Art Union. In their own proper capacities and selves they *might* possibly have been *quite*, instead of not *quite*, prepared to adopt such a plan, or, at all events, they would not have been startled by the "novelty" of such a proposition, knowing well, as all people versed in matters of Art do know, that this presumed, preposterous plan *has been adopted* and resorted to for the purpose of determining some very important contests of a similar character with that of the Cartoons; and, no doubt, instead of being startled, each one of the gentlemen could have told the Editor of the Art Union where, and when, and upon what occasion, it was resorted to. A person of the commonest sense will see, at once, that there is nothing "startling" in it; but that if all and every one of the exhibitors had been asked to say, which, *next to his own*, he considered the best work, and the decision left to hinge upon this, the result might have been full as perfect and generally satisfactory as it is at present.

*Chat.* Well, Palette, you must give your brother Editor credit for doing what, in my opinion, and in your own opinion too, unless your words belie your thoughts, he often does — stumble upon a thing, and seize a point worthy of a sensible man and a friend of Art. He has, in the last month's number, strongly rebuked the spirit of mammon, and reprobated and exposed the sad folly of attempting to make a show of eleven of the Cartoons *for money*, after what has taken place in Westminster Hall. The French journalists, he observes, have very properly fallen upon us for so disgraceful a project, in a way which clearly shows how closely the conduct of individuals may be associated and made to taint the national character.

*Pal.* My good old friend, I have not one word to say against my brother Editor, but a great deal to say in his favour, a boon that will always be at his service; and, as a writer upon Art, he is generally good natured and sometimes right, which is saying a good deal. In the Cartoon question he had got out of his depth altogether: upon a single sample of Art, upon a bit of nature, or bit of colour, an individual object, a tone, or a tint, he may exercise his prowess usefully and amusingly; but when he comes to consider an attempt in Art to which the principles of sound criticism and true taste are to be applied, and from which important and prophetic inferences are to be deduced, he is, as a matter of course, all abroad. This same gentleman, who is so anxious for the honour of Art, appears regardless of

that of criticism, and, at the same time that he predicts an amendment in the Artists in what they will do, and a repentance in them for what they have done, he has not the least suspicion that his remarks will need any alteration, or call for such signs of grace in himself as he prophesies in others. This is exactly the character of criticism *based upon nothing*, it has cost no pains to acquire, requires no pains to sustain, and calls for no exertion to amend. Like a work of instinct it is as perfect at first as at last. How little this resembles the prowess, the study, the labour, the unremitting efforts of the painter, whose work, the result of a whole life, is denounced, pulled to pieces, trodden in the dust, and dissipated in one little half hour of criticism !

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### REPUTATION AND SUCCESS IN ART.

THERE are some very curious phenomena connected with the reputation and success of certain Artists, which are highly enigmatical, and a few which are utterly inexplicable, setting at defiance even conjecture. Many things by which we are surrounded are so plain and easy, that, as we say, "those who run may read;" while for others, the "midnight oil" of study is burnt in vain. But a large portion of the world is too careless, indifferent, or illiterate to read at all, so that whether running, walking, or standing still, it is the same thing. That the most lucid matters should be obscure to such people is certainly no wonder. There are others whose constant endeavour it is to study and learn this sort of reading, in whatever tongue and characters it is written, and who by long practice and perseverance are at last able to unriddle and expose the most complicated cipher ever constructed by the astute diplomacy of circumstances; yet even to such people as these *some things* are still dark and impenetrable.

Deep buried among the most unfathomable of these lie the *causes* and the *means* by which certain of fortune's favourites have been raised to a position in which they are prominently seen, and their names heard loud sounding in the public ear.

For proofs of the truth of the real existence of such things, we need only refer to the case of Bernini, the Roman sculptor, architect, and every thing else, whose detestable taste once pervaded the whole world, and gave the canons of criticism to every thing every where; or to the more recent one, in which the rod of those false prophets of Art, Lely and Sir Godfrey Kneller, swallowed up and demolished that of the true ones, Rubens and Vandyke.

If we look at the nature of merit, which is proverbially modest, we shall discover a clue to the means by which it *may* be abashed and put down, so as to be passed over unnoticed for a time; but it will still be matter of surprise that the mere force and excellence of truth and justice should not operate more quickly to lift it from its degradation;

and the greatest wonder of all will still remain to be explained, namely, how it happens that impudent and empty pretension can be set up in its place, and made to take the rank, to assume and absorb the importance, of its superior: this is a phenomenon at once perplexing and astounding, and only to be believed because it cannot be denied. The doctrine of chances has been reduced to rules by which results can be fairly calculated. In one hundred persons of a certain age, that which is proverbially *most* uncertain, *life* itself can be estimated, and *death* indicated with more than the accuracy of round numbers; but the reputation of an aspirant for fame appears to be a matter which sets all human calculation and conjecture at defiance. This appears the more singular, considering the parade which is made in the world about excellence, and the respect and homage which is said to be its due. Men arrogate to themselves honour for being possessed of the *mere* ability to perceive it. They are men of taste, and of course disposed to reward the merit they discover. Yet warmed by the ambition to shine as mortals gifted with a peculiar perceptive power, and stimulated by a desire to advance what is good and useful, the which may be regarded as an exalted duty, and almost a common and a moral obligation, we find, in abundant instances, that the opportunity slips by without exciting attention, is frequently lost sight of, and is only perceived when it is too late to do more than mourn over it.

How many lamentable instances are to be found of the truth of these facts in the career of the Artist. In all other pursuits there are some; but in Art more than in any other. Nor is there any difficulty in accounting for this; it is necessary only to reflect on the condition of public education, and the consequent want of information peculiar to the subject of Art, to find a full and complete explanation. In Art, therefore, we may look for the grossest instances of reputations inflated into false dimensions, and of talent utterly neglected and lost.

It is very curious, after having lived *without*, on the *outside* as it were, of the circle of a man's reputation, to step within it, and to take the same view of it that is taken by his friends and intimates. His whole condition and every attribute which attaches to him are at once altered. What on the outside of the *ring* appears doubtful and unfixed, is within it reduced to a certainty; and what is narrow and untenable in the one case is broad, abundant, and satisfactory in the other; so that, in spite of any indifference, and even disinclination, you may feel to the contrary, you cannot help going with the current that runs so much in his favour.

Having become conscious of this, we set about wondering how it could have happened, and how it is that we so suddenly feel ourselves drawn into the stream, and floating away with the rest. No matter how obstinate a man may be in resisting the opinions of others, and in persevering in his own, no person ever found himself within the circle of another's friends without insensibly, perhaps, but in some degree yielding to the allurements, and quickly changing his opinion

of one he perceives to be the object of others' respect and approbation. This is a phenomenon worth reflecting upon; but it is nothing when compared with the inquiry as to how a reputation may originate, grow, and at last swell into mighty and mysterious importance by means which are incomprehensible. That a man's friends and admirers should be blind to his faults is both common and curious; but how it happens that one or two, or a few if you like, can succeed in blinding the many, that together make up the circle, is still more extraordinary. If a man's merits are few, a small circle of admirers will seem natural; but if they are many, it is difficult to conceive the nature of the obstacle that can successfully oppose the spread of his reputation, or prevent its commensurate extension.

It may fairly be questioned whether any profession will afford so many examples of men living and luxuriating upon the slenderest stock of talent, and starving upon the largest, as that of Art. You will sometimes find an Artist possessed of the smallest possible share of ability, who is more extensively employed and better paid than any other. If you speak to a person on the subject, and ask an explanation of so strange a matter, he will at once join you in wondering at a circumstance of which no explanation can be given, and another will do the same, and so on *ad infinitum*. Nobody can give you the why or the wherefore; but so it is. The profession wonder, and of course envy, the people who employ the lucky man wonder, and it is not unlikely even that he himself may wonder at his own success. It is scarcely necessary to add to this the fact, that while the meanest talent often meets with the noblest reward, the noblest powers are often wasted and lost in obscurity and neglect. Now the first of these facts is more extraordinary than the last: we can readily comprehend how an insensibility of excellence leads to the neglect of it; but it is puzzling to the last degree to give a rational reason for mediocrity being preferred to merit, and rewarded beyond it. Mankind are prone to err: this is so old and so true that to mention it is trite, if not ridiculous; but, after all, men in the general run of things are not such boobies as to prefer and to take the middling and the worst, when they might possess themselves of the good and the best.

There is but one way of explaining so singular a circumstance, and that is, that *they act under the influence of some delusion*. A person wishing for a portrait of himself, a relation, or a friend, does not wish to be made a monster of, nor a booby, nor to see those he respects reduced to such a dilemma. A person wishing to possess himself of a picture of a historical, domestic, or fancy subject, does not want a vile daub to hang upon his walls, a lampoon upon nature and his own taste; and yet it is extraordinary that the perpetrators of such things will often be the persons most extensively engaged in such like productions. Nothing so unnatural as this could happen, were it not that some powerful agency is at work by the influence of which the ordinary current of right and wrong is diverted from its proper channel. There are a thousand modes and ways by which the evils and miseries of a proper want of

information in the public are shown, and made to act against the interests of Art; and perhaps there is no one greater than that want of reliance upon self which always induces persons to seek assistance, and put themselves at the mercy of others. An individual having no knowledge of Art may still, under the guidance of natural taste, choose the good in preference to the bad; those of his own class in taste are few, those of that class who could guide him are fewer still; but the mass from whom he will be compelled to seek information are numerous enough, and the errors of their task will be in proportion to their numbers.

One grand fact connected with the explanation of our inquiry is fully illustrative of this. If an Artist has an extensive connection, as it is called, or in other words, if he has a number of persons who will recommend him for employment, that is to say, will use their endeavours to *influence* such as may be disposed to give employment to him in preference to another, such an Artist at once gets reputation and success. In this way it will be evident that out of the largest connection will come the largest quantity of employment, and *vice versa*. If the condition of artists were looked into, this would be found to be precisely the case in the great majority of instances, and what is still more curious as well as lamentable, is, that this is very much the case, let the talent of the Artist be what it may; it is otherwise impossible upon any rational principle to account for the success and the reputation attached to men who have the slenderest possible claim to either, but who in these important particulars stand on a level with the strongest. Of course no one will suppose that a reputation of any very great extent or duration can be built upon such a sandy foundation, but it serves for the day, and, what is the worst misfortune, often takes up the attention which is due to better things, until it is too late to bestow it, and to mar the efforts of genius.

That same brief interval of popularity which is still long enough to puff into importance empty pretence and mere mediocrity, and furnish an immortality of fame at once appropriate and worthy of its object, however, limited and contemptible it may be, is still long enough, perhaps, to drive genius to despair, to dishearten, and to kill it by neglect.

In the great mass of examples of spurious reputations and unmerited success, many will ever remain utterly inexplicable, the greater part will rest in obscurity, and a few only will offer themselves to the light of investigation. We shall see in these, no doubt, what belongs to all, that the groundwork of the evil complained of, the errors, the delusion, and the imposition of which it is made up, has its origin and being in the popular want of information on the subject of Art. Whether it be the cool calculating craft of self-interest, or the mistaken zeal of disinterested and well meaning persons who blunder with the best intentions, it is still ignorance which is acted upon, and made a tool to effect what is intended. If the friends of an Artist succeed in puffing up his merits beyond their

deserts, it is ignorance they work upon. If an attempt be made to beguile the public of their approbation or their money, it is popular ignorance which is the aim, the help, and the hope of the speculation.

One of the most fertile as well as the most legitimate sources of reputation to an artist is the *burine* of the engraver. His pictures can be in the hands of but a few, but the prints taken from them may be dispersed over the whole civilised world, and in the hands of every body. This is a fair and honourable source of fame, and happy is the Artist to whom it falls. While this is acknowledged, however, it must be observed, that merit is not sole arbiter in this matter, for chance, or an influence of another sort, may direct instead. FAVOURITISM, which is only another name for reputation and success in one sense, is an evil of the first magnitude in Art, and in all its concerns: but it is still distinct, since the object of its adoration *may* be a worthy one; but even when this is the case, the mischief arising from it is rather magnified than lessened. Whenever an artist becomes the favourite of the public, if it be no misfortune to the individual himself, and that it often is, it never fails to become a serious injury to the art he practises. It would be too much, perhaps, to expect that any mortal so favoured should make a sacrifice of his own for the interests of others, but it were sometimes to be wished that such an heroic act could be performed. There is on record one solitary instance of such noble conduct. Some fifty years ago, a leading Artist of the French Academy (I grieve, not to remember his name), conscious, it is said, of his own deficiencies as an Artist, and knowing that his station gave him an influence that made him a number of imitators among the tyros of the profession, absolutely threw aside his palette and his brushes, that he might not delude the ignorant and unthinking! The name of such a man ought to be made resplendent in the meridian of taste — it is forgotten! It is too much to expect to find more than one instance of such magnanimity in the world's memory, and perfectly unreasonable to look for any individual to follow so signal an example.

It is a fortunate circumstance that most evils have a tendency to cure themselves sooner or later, but, unhappily in some instances, the progress of their amendment is very slow indeed: in such cases, a little extraneous help is of great importance. It is, therefore, to be hoped that the evils of a false reputation, unmerited success, and that which is still worse, favouritism in Art, will, at some time or other, be reduced and done away with: there is certainly but one remedy, which is a good knowledge of Art, attended by that refined taste which can have no other sound and sure foundation. While the opposite condition to this exists, the influence which tends to check the operation of even a natural taste will prevail, and the tricks which are practised through self-interested, venal, and dishonest motives, will ever be successful. Whatever can be turned to account by any means, fair or foul, will be taken advantage of. When a work is produced, no matter of what degree of merit; if its author be a favourite with the

public, that is a sufficient recommendation. It is trash, peradventure ; no matter about that, it may be turned to account, it will sell. A friend is prevailed upon to take the picture, and a print-seller is at hand to provide and to offer to the public a print. There are dozens of such subjects before the public already in the market, and dozens that are infinitely better out of it, but they are not the productions of the favoured few. There are already too many subjects of the kind, the number of which exclude those that are better ; but this will sell too, then why should it not ? The public are slightly nauseated, but they will bear more ; then let them have it. The character of the Arts of the country is lowered by an inundation of inferior productions when the better are at hand. The state of Art and the character of its professors is laid open to the just animadversions of the men of taste of all nations. That does not injure the sale which is calculated upon. In order to push the commodity offered, and to take sufficient hold upon the weakness of the public, it is necessary to resort to the vulgarest artifices, and the most dishonest tricks ; no matter ; people can always be found who will undertake all that and a great deal more, and *yield* to it into the bargain. The work offered to the public is from the most celebrated pencil of the day, and this is the most splendid example of it. The publisher pledges his veracity and his reputation that there is nothing like it. Advertisements, paragraphs, and puffs, in all shapes, attest the fact. The public is bewildered, edified, charmed, humbugged, and the fame of the Artist established, for the time being, and extended at home and abroad. All the world hears of him, talks of him, his name is familiar to the tongue, the ear, and the eye of hosts of admirers, whose knowledge is as enviable, and whose taste is as pure as the source from whence such a reputation springs.

In cases where real merit excites the cupidity of speculators, it is degraded by being made the tool of trading cunning, and the object of mock and senseless adulation.

This, however, is but a small portion of the mischief effected by such a practice. The conversion of a few pedlers into princes, by means of wealth translated from one set of pockets to another, is a matter of small importance. It is the injury done to taste, the wrong done to talent, the importance given to mediocrity, and the *prestige* given to a reputation, contemptible when it is spurious, and weak, incompetent, and worthless, when it is real.

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#### A FOUR YEARS' RESIDENCE IN ITALY.

WE passed this night of our journey at Velletri. It was evening when we arrived, and was marked by one of those beautiful phenomena of nature which, although common in Italy, and, I suppose, in southern climates generally, has never, to the best of my knowledge,

been described or mentioned by any tourist, scribe, or poet. Lest the reader should think I am about to make some important relation, founded upon some great discovery, I must tell him at once what it is I mean. It is, then, that *peculiar and beautiful mixture of daylight and moonlight together*, producing an effect which the dullest and most unobservant person in the world could hardly remain insensible to, or fail to be forcibly struck with. I had seen it and been charmed with it before. As I stood one evening in a vineyard, a mile square, at Florence, with mountains and plains on one side of me, the curious and complicated architectural compositions of the "*cinque cento*" on the other, I could not help expressing surprise, even though I spoke to myself, that no writer had ever described an effect so singularly attractive to the eye of a painter, and so exceedingly beautiful in itself. Upon entering *Velletri*, which is rather a picturesque town, this phenomenon was more sensibly manifested than I had before observed it. As we mounted the rising ground, and entered the curious old gateway, and made our way along the narrow streets, passing between the church and its tower, which stands alone at a respectful distance, and at last arrived in the unpaved *piazza*, with its rude fountain, and drew up our little vehicle at the door of the *Locanda della Posta*, I kept puzzling myself with the effect of objects about me, and wondering how the singular appearance they presented could be accounted for. In whatever direction I turned my eyes, I saw all objects *without shadows*, and illuminated by a peculiar light that looked artificial or supernatural; round forms appeared to have lost their characteristic markings, and square ones their angles, and those that projected and retreated seemed to do so without any apparent cause to an eye practised in the visual machinery of such matters. There was a look of transparency about every thing, no dark sides; and where any markings were seen they appeared out of their places. The people who walked the street in their gay dresses, for it was a *festa* night, as their white linen, bright colours, and abundant trinkets, manifested, like *Peter Schlemmel*, seemed all to have disposed of their shadows; none appeared; so that it was difficult to tell whether they touched what they *must* have walked upon, or were flying with the motion of pedestrians. On arriving at the door of the hotel, you first catch a long and open glance of that range of mountains which extend to *Terracina*, upon which, at their foot, on their sides and upon their tops, lifted high into the air, you see perched those mountain towns and villages which give such a peculiar and picturesque character to the landscape of Italy. Nearest at hand, as your eye crosses the *Palude*, or the marshes, you perceive on the distant border of the plain the little town of *Giulienella* (I think); and midway in a wild break of the mountain you have the curious and antique remains of several Volscian cities: the first is *Core*, with its Cycloplan walls and a history that goes beyond the records of time, almost conjecture. More to the right, at a few miles' remove, stands *Norma*, on the pinnacle of a rock, and on the very edge of a precipice,



looking down upon the ruined village of *Nimfi*, with its mill and stream; while higher still, before reaching the modern town, you have *Norma Vecchia*. Here, again, are Cyclopien walls, the remains of an immense *Portone*, or entrance to a city, now covered with corn-fields, whose subterranean structure extends for miles, openings into which have served the farmer to dispose of the rubbish of agriculture for countless ages past, while nothing remains above ground but the hoary remnant of a huge temple made up of enormous blocks of time-worn stone. Lower to the right the classical village of *Sermoneta* shows itself, and farther still *Sezze* and *Rocca Secca*. Just above *Core* you see the tops of mountains which are in the vicinity of *Frosenone*, and still more remote, at a distance of eighty miles, appears the heads of mountains in the *Abruzzi*.\* All these objects were seen under an effect of light which gave them an extraordinary charm, and rendered them as distinct and clear as if they had been miniature models floating steadily in air, and close to the eye. This extreme clearness in the forms of objects is common under ordinary circumstances; but the peculiar illumination under which they were now seen gave them the effect of being lighted by two lights of *apparently* equal strength, and but slightly different in colour. If the reader will imagine a *bright moon put shining into a perfect daylight sky*, he will have some notion of this beautiful phenomenon as regards the illuminating agency; but of the effect produced he can have none: perhaps a *sine umbra* lamp in *name*, if not in use, may convey a faint impression. In England the moon shines only when the sun has done; but in Italy they shine together in beautiful rivalry, and the effect of both is at the same time clearly perceptible. In England, the light of the moon is sometimes seen mixing with the twilight. In Italy there is little or no twilight; so that when the moon makes her appearance early, her light unites with the daylight, and causes the beautiful phenomenon spoken of. When the day closes, which it does more suddenly than with us, an Italian moonlight is very much like an English one; but while this mixture of illumination lasts, the effect is very different, singular, and beautiful indeed. The colour

\* While looking about me I encountered a young man of whom I made some inquiries relative to the scene and the objects before me. I found, as I expected, that he knew very, very little about the matter, although he lived so near upon the spot, or what we locomotive people would call the spot. From him I learnt what I already knew, that the little town I saw before me was called *Core*. "It was very antique, was it not?" *Altro!* was his reply, which means, *you may say that and more*, if it means anything. "Were there any curious things there?" He did not know. "Ruins?" He did not know. "Churches? how many inhabitants?" *Come saprei*—how *could* he know. "Some curious old walls?" He nodded his head. "How far was it?" He shrugged his shoulders. Then it appeared he knew nothing about it. His reply was "I am but a bit of a boy—*un pezzo d'uno ragazzo*: all I know is that *that* is the first town that ever was built after the world was made."—"But those mountains behind, where *were* they, and what were they called?" He never heard they were called any thing. "But they *must* have names?" He did not see that they must, for "who was there to give them names when they were made?" As there was no arguing against such philosophy, I thanked him for his information, and turned to seek it elsewhere.

of every object, as well as its form and detail, is distinctly seen; the clear blue sky, the green verdure of the trees, and every tint and tinge of the brown sun-dried mountain or of the volcanic sterile rock and plain. Another day seems to have arisen on the one that is passing away; and thus your attention is arrested by the change. As I stood looking at the round white-washed tower of the little church, I was surprised to observe how very slight was the difference between the lighted and the shadowed sides, even while the sun was still above the horizon. If the reader will take the trouble to think for a moment, he will see that there must of necessity be a short period in which the illumination of the day-lit hemisphere, and that lighted by the moon (I speak of her when at or near the full), is exactly equal in intensity. If the hemisphere of the sun at one period contains more light than that of the moon, and at another period that of the moon contains more than that of the sun, which naturally follows as the light of that great luminary subsides, it will follow, as a necessary consequence, that in the course of this change there will be a period when the illumination of both hemispheres are equal. Now this is a circumstance which can never take place in a country where one light *subsides* before the other *begins*, and hence the phenomenon spoken of and described. I strongly suspect that it is this peculiarity which has obtained and given to Italian moonlight its high character; for I have been an observer of the moon in Italy under ordinary circumstances, and I cannot conscientiously say that I have ever beheld her with a face more luminously bright than I have frequently gazed at in this country. As to the absurdity which has been put forth by somebody fond of an antithesis and a paradox, that the moon in Italy is as bright as the sun in England; I should meet so extravagant an assertion, even if it were made but as an hypothesis or an illustration, with an old English epithet, more honest than polite, and declare it to be utter humbug!

I remember the first time I saw this beautiful phenomenon, (attended as it was by the evening star, that never failed to bring with it thoughts of home, from thinking of the dearest of things, and turning my thoughts to the next dear—my Art,) some of the pictures of Turner came into my mind, and appeared naturally suggested by the effect of the objects about me. I remembered his moonlights, particularly one I had seen in a picture of *careening* or loading some vessels at a quayside by night. Most people thought, and said, myself among the rest, that the imitation of moonlight in this picture was exaggerated and false; in fact that it was not moonlight but daylight, of an unnatural character. I now reflect upon this picture as a perfect and beautiful example of Art, illustrative of this curious phenomenon. No two representations can be less alike, although meant for the same thing, than the brown, dense moonlights of Vanderneer, and the blue lucid day and moonlight pictures of Turner, and yet both are true to nature, and dear to Art.

While engaged in admiring these celestial effects, my attention was

frequently drawn off by the incessant beating a drum, which I knew indicated something going forward in that portion of the creation which has ever the strongest attraction for me—the human. It was certain that the day was a festa, and probable enough, that some ceremony new to me was performing. I had seen lights glaring, and there was evidently a stir of light footsteps and a rustling of dresses, and a busy hum of vocal sounds in the air. So I walked to the gateway adjoining the hotel, and there, just behind in a confined and triangular space, I found the votaries of a saint whose name I have forgotten, devoutly kneeling before a shrine enclosing his effigies surrounded by burning lights, and decorated with green boughs and flowers. The drummer who had headed the procession with his noisy instrument now ceased his din, slung his drum at his back, and withdrew. Perhaps a hundred persons of both sexes, and of every age, from infancy upwards, now knelt at the lighted shrine upon the earth; an impressive silence ensued, and a stillness as if a living mass of human creatures had been suddenly deprived of life or converted into statues. The night was calm, the bright moonlight fell quietly upon some antique buildings at the back of the scene, and the blue sky looked more intensely blue by the contrast of the lamps and tapers. No one moved, and not a whisper disturbed the serenity around. The crowd of worshippers were closely and earnestly engaged in silent prayer. The most careless observer must have been heart-touched at the deep and solemn earnestness that appeared every where. Whilst it lasted, there was no unbending from the steady purpose by which all seemed possessed—no eye wandered or relaxed its firm hold upon the object of its contemplation, nor was there any change in the position of body or limb. As this continued for several minutes, an unearthly stillness appeared to creep over all, as if induced by some mighty spell that could not be resisted or broken. It was beautiful to look at the different groups—the simple child with its sinless face kneeling by the side of the aged man, whose long gray locks half concealed the severe aspect of serious thought, and shrouded an expression of deep awe and veneration and repentance. The mother with her family—her features, her look, her identity mocked and multiplied in the resemblances around her. Near her, perhaps, you saw a bevy of those young girls, who, as I have often observed in processions, unite together, each contributing her share of beauty, as it were, so as to make up a constellation of attraction worthy the occasion. It was truly beautiful to observe the modest mien of one all gentleness, simplicity, unconscious that any eyes present were not bent down like her own, subdued by the same spirit, and made to accompany the emotions which filled her young and pious heart. By the side of her there was a companion less bending in form, and yielding less to the impulse which lowers real meekness to the earth: she appeared touched with a deeper, darker sentiment—it may be the attendant upon a temperament more gloomy, but still as pure. The next sweet face is sorrow-touched. She kneels apart from all, and looks to me as

if her torn heart communicated with the departed spirit of some one whose absence I could fancy is indicated by the void space around her. It may be a groundless fancy, but I cannot help regarding that young creature as the devoted child of disappointment and misfortune. Those large dark orbs now lifted in supplication, perhaps for another, are full of the light of sympathy, and the soft dew of sensibility; they are the flood-gates, the fountain of the tears of the heart. What a contrast is this sweet face with the wrinkled old hag behind her; it is impossible to believe or imagine that they are both women—both the same creatures, the one old and the other young, and that there is no other difference between them; that this will even become like that, or that that was even like this, in nothing besides on earth is there any such; but the prayer is ended, the mystic sign of salvation on every brow descends to the breast, and passing from the left shoulder to the right, completes the airy symbol. And now they rise, and closely surrounding the shrine of the Saint, begin to sing the “Ave.” Clear, sweet, and natural arises the concord of mixed voices, as the beautiful and touching air wafts the words, *Ave Maria, ora pro nobis*, to its celestial destination. It is curious to hear music, in *this country* it appears so, sung devoid of any art that reminds you of the Italian *gusto*, and with a simplicity and artlessness of manner, which touches the feelings more sensibly and more lastingly than the most finished performances. Certain I am, that when memory fails before or at that awful period, when all things of earth drop gradually from their mental hold, it will still cling fondly to *some* things; and among them, enclosed in the recesses of the heart, I shall find a memorial of the beautiful sights and the touching sounds my senses have gathered from a rite which calls forth this appeal to the Virgin.

I remember it was at *Velletri* that I saw a kind of beauty in a female, which I never saw before or since. It was not exhibited alone in one individual, but with certain modifications in several. In almost every part of Italy, I have observed a new variety of some kind or other in the persons and features of the inhabitants; and the beauty I speak of, I am inclined to think is almost peculiar to this spot. To describe it would be impossible, to attempt to sketch it vain and futile, nor will it do to say that, in order to comprehend, it must be seen; for I feel quite convinced, that an eye unpractised in the detection and comparison of delicate and minute differences, would see in this peculiar beauty nothing more than a very pretty or a very striking *look*, and not be conscious that such a face was made up in a manner, or contained ingredients of beauty that were not common every where. I have observed and reflected, and I think I can say, I feel a conviction that the great leading trait of difference which distinguishes nations, districts, and localities, is to be found always in the eye. In passing rapidly through various countries, this has struck me very forcibly. The Italian, the Swiss, the Prussian, the French, the Dutch, have all presented to my notice abundant proofs of this fact.

The *English eye and eyebrow* are strikingly distinct from all others, and others are distinct from them, although this trait often assimilates and is confounded in other nations. I am certain that it would be no difficult task to portray the peculiar *personality* (if one may so call it) of every nation by a pictured representation of the eye only, and as regards the compound character of our own nation, who can doubt that Ireland, Scotland, and Wales might not be designated by the same simple feature? The peculiar characteristic of the beauty of Velletri in an eye so richly fringed and so full, that could its dimensions be taken, you would at once declare it was too large to be beautiful; but could you see it, it would even after shake your faith in the efficacy of all measurements, and in all rules of proportion and relation. This beauty, however, is not confined to the eye alone. Nature never works in a *botchy* way, and however difficult it may be to trace, there is, no doubt, a mystic connection, perhaps a general consent, of all the parts of the face to contribute their portion of effect, so as to render the whole beautiful, and *one* particular of the whole peculiarly striking.

It is frequently as great a relief both to the reader and the writer of books, to get a change in the subject matter, as it is to the tourist, when *circumstances are making the matter of his future work* to undergo a change in the state of his perceptions and feelings, and from contemplating and philosophizing upon what is taking place, to be called away from himself—to supper. This was just the writer's case at the moment the scene ended which has been described. My companion was absent, but *that* did not surprise and perplex me, so I did as I have always done; and not without amusement, and even advantage, I set about to *companionize* the writer, and try to screw something out of him. This you *can* do in Italy, or any where else except in England, without exposing yourself to freedoms which you might not like. From him I learnt two things, one of which is, that the wine of Velletri is reckoned the strongest in the Papal States; the other, that my companion was engaged in discussing its qualities at a wine house at the bottom of the town. Having learnt this fact relative to the wine, there was not the least difficulty in accounting for the *nature* of the occupation of my fellow traveller, although the extent to which it might be carried was somewhat doubtful. My supper table offered me a sample of two sorts of wine, white and red; filling two large clear glass bottles, placed, one on each side of me. It was that kind of sample, however, which is always offered you at hotels, where they sell foreign wines of a high price, which, as a matter of course you would not ask for; if they brought you the kind, you were satisfied to drink. Knowing this fact, I observed to the *cameriere* that I supposed *this* was not the *best* wine the country afforded; at which he put his fore-finger and thumb to his mouth, and making a motion as if drawing something out of it to the extent of half a yard in length, he commenced a kind of whistle, which ended in the word *Altro!* The wine he said was the best they had in

the house, *except* — I knew *what* of course was excepted, and resolved to content myself with what I had, and which I found quite good enough for me. As I sat musing between my two bottles, that together must have contained a good half gallon, and began to see the table-cloth peep through the ruddy remains at the bottom of one of them, I thought of England, its inhabitants (some of them), of its habits, and its bad practice of drinking strong drinks, as well as the folly, believing it was impossible to get respectably drunk any where else, or upon any thing else, in the wine way, than port and sherry. I knew perfectly well that for the wine I was drinking I should have to pay about *four-pence* a bottle, *hotel price*; so that if I liked to add another to it agreeable to the good old practice of the "rule of three," I should have the whole *three* for a shilling, a pleasant reflection, and I felt, I must acknowledge, by the strength of that already taken, that more than three upon that particular occasion would be more than enough. My friend, the waiter, told me the best wine of *Velletri* would bear transportation to any part of the world, a fact which I have since ascertained to be perfectly true; and now I am able *soberly* to reflect upon it, I am the more surprised that the good people of England still continue to drink wine at five shillings a bottle, when they might obtain for a five pound note, five hundred bottles of a beverage, to all but the practised port wine and sherry bibber, almost as strong, and twice as pleasant: but the duty, I know what will be said, yet still duty and freight included, it would cost at home about eighteen pence a bottle!

In the morning, rather late, my companion made his appearance. I gave him the *buon giorno*, and was proceeding to ask him where he had slept, but as he seemed not quite certain of the fact, I forbore to press the question. Wherever it was, he had slept soundly, and had evidently furnished an ample and an undisturbed repast for those insect inquisitors, the musquitoes, and no doubt others. He wished me to depart before breakfast, for some reason which he promised to give me upon the road, so I consented. Without having *pledged* myself to any thing, I had resolved upon *teetotalism*, as regarded my breakfast, as long as I lived, or wherever I could get it: I therefore feared I might meet with no place in which the one thing needful, hot water (I had taken care for the rest), was to be had, but I found we had to pass the grand *albergo* at *Cisterna*, where I could get that and every thing else I wanted. I had often heard of the shameless extortion of this place, and the occasion in question afforded a gratifying opportunity of witnessing, recording, and revenging an affront of the kind which is offered to the pockets of victimised travellers. In the first person singular I should be almost ashamed to acknowledge the fact: in my editorial *personality* I may admit the soft impeachment, and assert the edifying information that *we* had demolished, accompanied with bread, butter, no milk, and sundry cups of tea sweetened with sugar, self-provided, six new laid eggs, roasted in the embers of a wood fire, for the which *we* were charged the sum of half a *paul*

each. Now the *paulo* being five pence English as near as possible, the whole sum amounts to the enormity of half a crown. *Scellarati infamé senza vergogna.*

My companion laughed very heartily at me, *accidentè* plentifully the Albergiste, after which we mounted and departed; and now came the inquiry as to where we were going. *Sezze*, we knew, was the name of the little town, but how far was it off, and how were we to get at it, and what kind of accommodation were we likely to find when we got there? *Ah! chi sa?* (who knows?) my guide and companion knew nothing about it, or any thing more than that he had *Sezze* in the list of places we intended to visit. With *Sezze*, and the chance of finding it before us, we continued our journey, the driver very soon resigning himself to the arms of Morpheus, and the reins of the poney to me, which I could not refuse to take as in travelling we must take every thing that offers. We jogged on in the bright sunshine, and the quiet of paths none ever travel, for we had now left the high road which leads from Rome to Naples, by the margin of the sea. That fine range of mountains already mentioned, with its many picturesque towns perched on its sides and summit, lay parallel with our route, and *there* was to be found *Sezze somewhere*. Towards evening we asked a countryman, who pointed it out most snugly placed at a height of about three miles from the level of the plains. Without suspecting that any difficulties stood in the way, we made for the road we saw winding along with a few interruptions to the top, and which at that distance looked tolerably good. In an hour we arrived at the foot of it, where it certainly did not appear quite so good as we expected, but much as the Italian phrase designates it, *non tanta buona*, not as good as a good road is, and not so bad as a bad one; so we dismounted, fastened the reins to the *carratina*, and left the little horse to pick his way according to his own fancy. We had not gone far before we found it was necessary to give him every now and then a little help, and in a very short space of time these demands upon us became more numerous and urgent, and presently some obstructions offered themselves, which seemed to defy our united efforts and inclinations. However, we persevered and overcame them. We had not mounted a third of the way when we discovered that the poney had already had enough of it: this is not the right phrase, for *he* very soon had as much as he wanted at any time; but it was quite clear that he now began to flag, the real cause of which was very intelligible to us. He stopped to breathe and to rest every two minutes, and the old argument resorted to upon common occasions failed altogether. *Come si fa?* what *was* to be done? It was a clear case the little horse must have half, but where was he to get it? Nowhere was it to be found, except in our own precious selves, so we must give it. Becoming quite sensible of our condition, and certain that, unless we helped ourselves, we should never reach *Sezze* that night, we turned resolutely to work; one took one wheel and the other the other, and pulled at the spokes most lustily. I must do the poney

the justice to say, that for about a mile he did certainly appear to enter into our intentions, and to back our endeavours a little: but presently he appeared to lose all interest in what was going on; and although we pushed forward, the vehicle leaving him nothing to do but to walk at his ease, he at last refused to do even that, and insisted on our pushing him too up the mountain as well as the *carratina*; and not content with this even, when we got near the top the little rascal made an attempt to lie down. It was a lucky thing for him that the *frusta* (whip), never much of an instrument in Italy, had been demolished for the last two days: it must be admitted that he had had the full benefit of it, and what was now left was certainly bestowed upon him with a thorough good will, and not entirely without effect.

All the Mountain Towns present rather an interesting peculiarity at the close of the day. During the day they are almost empty, as the peasantry engaged in the various occupations of the vineyards, the olive-grounds, the fields, and the pastures, leave home early in the morning, taking with them provisions for the day; and as they have a toilsome walk back to their mountain homes, they never return till evening. It is then an interesting sight to look from some spot lifted high in the glowing light of the setting sun, and then to descend into the tender gloom of the valleys, slopes, and plains, buried in soft shadow, or lighted up, as has been described, by the moon, and to see in every direction groups of men, women, and children, slowly climbing the winding paths of the steep mountain, the young taking short cuts, and mounting with agile step the most rugged passes, while the aged wind slowly round by a long and easier route. The young girls walk commonly hand in hand, and as they immerge from the shade into openings glowing with the golden light of evening, their picturesque figures and the bright colours of their costumes are seen to great advantage in connection with the scene around them; and as they usually accompany their movements with some wild air, sung in concert, the effect is altogether touching and highly delightful. Most of them return laden with something: some bring wood for fuel, others fruit, grapes, figs, olives; and it is surprising to see with what ease and even grace these sun-browned daughters of labour mount the stony and rugged acclivities, bearing burthens upon their heads which a strong man, unused to such exertion, would soon sink under: indeed, it is difficult, as I know by experience, to keep pace with them, even with nothing to encumber or burthen you. I have often observed on the steep side of a mountain, upon which I have found it difficult to walk without frequently stopping to breathe, a shepherd ascend, blowing his pipes, which to fill requires the lungs of the north-wind, with as much ease and unconcern as if the road were a level turnpike. I have always found that whenever you encounter a peasant, man, woman, or child, whatever trouble it may cost to put down and then replace the burthen they carry, you *must* stop and partake of whatever their baskets contain. If it be fruit, you must have the finest and largest sample of it; you cannot escape: and some-



times a bit of coarse bread, the half of an apple, or an onion, is pressed upon you with an earnestness and a warmth that has so much the air of hospitable sincerity and kindness about it, that, however much you may dislike what is offered, you are compelled to accept it. An offer of payment for such kind of gifts, although the Italians are generally fond of money, is at once felt to be uncivil and offensive; so much so, that any one who has once made the attempt will never do it a second time. I know no situation in which the peculiar beauty of face and figure of the *paesana* is so strikingly displayed as in descending a mountain path, and bearing upon her head the elegantly shaped basket found in almost every part of Italy.

In pursuing our toilsome task up the *best* road apparently which led to the town we had been observed by the peasants and idlers who had assembled in the *piazza* after the labours of the day; and as such a sight as a vehicle of any sort in such a situation was a novelty, never seen perhaps in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, our appearance and purpose excited no small quantity of wonder and curiosity. When we arrived at the gate we found it thronged with people quite in a commotion of excitement. As my companion was the best *spokeman*, although it had not proved so in applying himself to the wheels in mounting the hill, I wished to leave the thing entirely to him in asking and deciding upon where we should go on our arrival. A number of inquiries were made, in a civil way, as to who and what we wanted, and where we wished to go, and even where we came from; but, for some reason or other, my companion refused to answer them, and preserved a sullen silence. I spoke to him in the language which we were in the habit of *murdering*, but he requested I would be silent; he knew, he said, what he was about. We jogged on in this way with the whole town at our heels, their curiosity almost more than a match for their good manners. We had mounted a couple of benders, half hoops, over the little vehicles, and upon this had hung a striped linen cloth to keep the sun off during the day. A machine with two wheels in such a place was wonder enough; but, covered as it was, it had a mystery attached to it almost alarming. I began to feel my situation rather unpleasant, as it had become now quite dark; and although I had no absolute fear of any rough treatment or foul play, I had *heard* of such things, and the manner of my fellow-traveller was calculated to create suspicion. But we now turned into a very dark and narrow street, and arrived at a door, where he entered, and I passed some unquiet minutes watching certain matters that the *carratina* contained, in the midst of a perfect mob of people, one pushing on the other, until his return. Without speaking, he turned the head of the pony about, and with some difficulty we got round, and made our way out of the end of the street. I now ventured to ask him what he was going to do. He did not know, and did not believe we should find any accommodation anywhere. Why would not he ask some one to direct him? He would not tell! I had just made up my mind to seek some information of a priest, whose cocked-hat I saw in the crowd, when the vehicle

stopped at another door of a house not looking at all like an inn; but never mind; I felt I should be heartily glad to escape, let it be wherever it might; and presently my companion, who had gone into the house, returned laughing, and followed by all the women in it, old and young, bawling and squalling most unmercifully. But a welcome offered by the rusty hinge of a door, or sounded by a file upon the edge of a saw, not bad similes of the voices, would just then have been celestial music. Here we were to rest; so the contents of the *carratina* were handed out; and as each article appeared by the flickering lamp that was held out of the door by an old woman, who had far more wrinkles than hairs on her head, the woman who received them set up screams of wonder, and there was a contest for everything. A sketching-stool produced paroxysms of delight; a colour-box was awfully mysterious; a carpet-bag marvellous; but when a couple of air-cushions made their appearance, a shout of astonishment, and a laugh that filled the whole house and extended to the idlers in the street was begun, and certainly never finished while we remained in it. The instant anything was given into the hands that offered themselves, it was snatched away and carried off as if by magic. I began to suspect that I should never see half my lumber again, but on entering I found all carefully packed together, and safe, at all events for the present. I now discovered, however, that we had got into accommodations of a far less convenient and promising aspect than any we had yet encountered. Indeed, we were but just entering upon that class of *accommodation* I have so often heard described by travellers in accents of horror and woe, who expected to find their arrival anticipated by five hundred years of civilisation, and every possible convenience. I had never got into such a place before, and I felt amused at the idea of putting so many difficulties to the test, having never yet experienced any worth complaining about. I therefore put the best face I could upon the matter; and, as the victualling department fell upon me, I resolved to discharge its duties in the best possible manner. When everything was a little put in order, and certain trunks, baskets, farming tools, wine-making utensils, half a cart-load of Indian corn, some cocks and hens, a child's crib, with sundry particulars thereto belonging, were turned out to make room for the *forestieri* (strangers), I began to inquire as to what was to be had in the eating way. "What would you like?" was the reply. As I knew this question is only put to unfortunate people, in order to ascertain to what extent they can be disappointed, by hearing them name everything but what is to be had, I cut the matter short, by telling them to get anything and everything they liked. I knew perfectly well that the only things obtainable were *pollastri ed ove* (fowls and eggs). I had seen the first walking about when I came in, and I had a notion there might be the latter in the house as a natural consequence. I also knew the reason they were allowed the free range of the bedrooms; at least I had heard that was the case. I don't much like to tell the reader; but a faithful historian should not shrink from anything. There is in Italy, in the houses, in the palaces, in the churches, in the fields, in the air, on the earth, in short on everything and

everywhere, an abundant and prolific insect, numerous as the sand of the sea, whose name might be "Legion," but in Italian it is *pulci*; it may have a singular for any thing I know of, but I never heard a single one spoken of, so that I am disposed to regard it as a legitimate example of a noun of numbers. Now cocks, hens, and chickens having very sharp eyes, sharp beaks, and sharp appetites, will, it is said, dispose of as many of these insects in one hour about daybreak as a human creature, by the aid of his finger and thumb, will destroy in a month, so that their operations in these localities are of the utmost importance in providing comfort for man and sustenance for themselves. Whether the woodcock actually lives by suction, on air by itself, or includes in it a certain proportion of insect food, is with some folks a question; at all events, his *trail* is a delicacy. *Pollastri*, who pick up a precarious existence, the usual case in Italy, and in that sense may be said to live upon air, including insects, although served in the same way during life, are afterwards served up to the consumer in a different manner—a pleasant matter both for his stomach and imagination. I was musing upon such matters, and wondering whether or not supper was ready, when a short woman came stumping into the room, holding the long legs of three or four dark-looking fowls in her hand, that screamed and flapped their wings, and looked about in all directions with their heads awry, and asked me how many I would like to have cooked for supper! Not caring much whether they were cooked at all after waiting so long, I answered, carelessly, "That she might cook them all, and eat them too if she liked." The provoking devil burst into a loud laugh, and said, "And you will pay for them?" "Certainly." "*Ebbene*," she said, holding out her hand, "*darm' il quattrini*" (give me the money). I had till then never heard the word *quattrini*, which is not common everywhere, and, although I might readily have guessed what was intended, I asked what *quattrini* meant. Holding the fowls close to my face, she screamed in my ear "*quattrini*" three or four times, until I believe the next effort would have deprived me of hearing as long as I lived.

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#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS AND READERS.

THE Editor's absence from home occasioned a defalcation of some pages in the Number of last month: the reader will find them supplied in this. Certain matters are still neglected from the impossibility of attending to them.

A Treatise on Beauty will be commenced next month; and a paper on Drawing from Real Models will be given.

A review of the work on "Landscape Painting," by a "Graduate of Oxford" is forthcoming, and in the meantime it is warmly recommended to the *study*, not the perusal merely, of those who are interested in such matters.

Will our friend and brother at *Welbatch* furnish the "Memoirs" he mentions?

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THE

# ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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## BEAUTY.

### AN ORIGINAL HYPOTHESIS.

THERE is scarcely a subject which has exercised the talents, learning, and research of writers more than the subject of Beauty, nor is there one upon which they, as well as their readers, are less agreed.

The whole world, both savage and civilised, are arbiters of Beauty; all acknowledge it without knowing what it is, and all feel its effects without any knowledge of their cause. There are objects which whole nations contemplate with delight, and hold in veneration for their Beauty, which others regard with horror and disgust. In short, there are no two individuals whose notions and impressions from what is called a beautiful object are alike; who then shall decide what Beauty is—its cause, the mode of its operation, or the extent of its effect?

The object of this theory is to prove that Beauty has a real and *material* existence, in opposition to those theories which hold that Beauty is *immaterial* and associative, and is not an inherent and physical property of objects, but a mere emotion of the mind which contemplates them, arising out of an association of ideas.

A very simple solution of one of the great difficulties of the subject will naturally present itself to the mind of one who is conversant with the forms and characters of objects, and who sees or fancies he sees and knows the qualities by which a thing is made beautiful or ugly, but which appears too simple to found an hypothesis upon, and unequal to the explanation of how it happens, that an endless number of things are called beautiful, which possess no properties in common with each other. It is, however, upon this simple solution that this theory is based and supported. Without reflecting as to which of the senses the term Beauty properly belongs, it is natural to observe that it is applied under the sanction of custom to objects of *all the senses*, and to *immaterial* as well as to *material* things, and that we speak of beautiful sights, beautiful tastes, beautiful sounds, beautiful smells, beautiful sensations from touch, beautiful thoughts, beautiful

contrivances, &c. &c., just as we speak of that peculiar beauty of face and form which is directly and properly the object of our inquiry.

Now for all this, and as much more as the inquiry involves, there appears to be but one simple solution, but this is so easy and natural, putting to flight such a host of theoretic fancies and speculations, that it is difficult to believe in its capabilities; however, it is this which will be put forward, and left to the decision of the inquirer. It certainly appears singular, that this simple mode of explaining a difficult subject should never have struck any of the clearer minds by which the subject has been so laboriously and learnedly handled; but in life there are sufficient instances to prove that the simplest truths are often the most difficult to seize and appropriate, and perhaps it may appear that this is one of them, and that missing this has been a stumbling-block in the way of all attempts to explain and elucidate one of the most interesting and most disputed subjects of human inquiry.

Here are two grand points of investigation for us — the one is the *thing* we call BEAUTY, the other, the customary use of the term BEAUTIFUL.

First, as to the use of the term. The solution of this difficulty is, that the term beautiful is applied *figuratively*, precisely in the same way that we apply the term *sweet*.

It is not necessary, of course, to say more of the figurative use of the term *sweet*, than just to refer to its use in such phrases as the following: a sweet child, a sweet scene, a sweet voice, a sweet singer, sweet looks, sweet sounds, sweet smells, &c. &c.

I will suppose, however, that a person does not admit the term beautiful to be used figuratively as the term sweet indisputably is. Let him ask himself what proofs there are that it is not used precisely in the same way, he will most probably say that sweet is a highly pleasing, well-known, well-defined quality of certain substances submitted to an equally well-known test, and admitted by all the world under that term, or some other by which it is recognised; that it differs entirely from beauty, which has no acknowledged *physical existence*, and is not subject to any such test. He is, however, to observe, here he is not giving a *proof* that Beauty has no *physical existence*, but merely echoing an opinion respecting it, which begs the question, and which is now in process of examination. If it can be shown that Beauty has an independent and physical existence, and that it is as much a real property of bodies as hard, soft, hot, cold, sweet, sour, or any others, then there can be no objection why a term borrowed from it should not be used figuratively, as well as from sweet, sour, hot, cold, hard, or soft, or any other such as we are in the constant habit of using.

For the present let us confine ourselves to the term beautiful; let us consider the variety of ways in which it is used, and see if we can discover the cause of its almost indefinite application.

I have said I believe the term beautiful to be used figuratively pre-

cisely the same as the term sweet is. I contend, and shall attempt to show, by future arguments and examples, that the two terms are exactly parallel ones; that they are alike in the offices they hold relative to the senses to which they respectively belong, and in common language are employed in the same way.

Thus much is admitted, then, that sweet is a pleasing, well-known quality of certain well-known substances, distinguishable by a well-known test, and that a figure is borrowed from it which is used and acknowledged to be expressive of what is pleasing in a great variety of objects totally unlike each other in their nature and in their mode of being; but that if Beauty be also a figurative term, borrowed from qualities equally physical and demonstrable by a certain test, these qualities and that test are not apparent.

Thus the question stands between the inquirer and myself, and thus far I conceive there is nothing to object to.

The figurative applications of the term sweet to those objects which delight us in various ways is in itself an irrefragable proof of the pleasing sensation we experience from tasting honey, sugar, milk, and such like substances; so that when sweet looks, a sweet voice, a sweet sleep, a sweet poem, a sweet song, a sweet scene is mentioned, you are referred to your corporal sense of the agreeableness of sweet for a confirmation that the things mentioned are as agreeable as the substances themselves.

It may not be amiss to notice, that a metaphor is in its nature nothing more than a shortened or concise simile: we first say that the heart of a brave man is like the heart of a lion, and we next say such a man is lion-hearted.

Mr. Burke has observed, that "SWEET IS THE BEAUTIFUL OF TASTE." He was led no doubt to make this deduction, and adopt this phraseology, in conformity with his own system, which gives Beauty a material existence. He supposes the eye to be affected by the sensible qualities of beautiful objects, as the palate (or tongue, to use a more exact word) is by the sensible qualities of sweet substances.

I adopt a parallel phraseology and say that Beauty is the "*highest degree of the pleasing of sight*," just as sweet is the highest degree of the pleasing of taste. Whether it be admitted or not that the eye is susceptible of any degree of organic pleasure, it is quite clear that the four other organs of sensation *are*: each of them possesses the faculty of receiving pleasure from outward objects in various degrees of intensity, from the lowest up to the highest.

It is certainly pleasing to observe, and perhaps new to show, how curiously we are circumstanced with regard to the means we have of expressing the *highest degree of the pleasing*, when we speak of the perceptions of any other organ than the palate. This sense has a term peculiar to it, expressive of that *highest degree*; but it will be seen by the following table no other sense has this advantage, unless indeed we admit the eye to have it,—a point which is contended for in this hypothesis:—

Organs.		Sensations.		Highest degree of the pleasing of each.
Eye	-	Seeing	-	Beautiful.
Ear	-	Hearing.	-	- - -
Nose	-	Smelling.	-	- - -
Palate	-	Tasting	-	Sweet.
Touch	-	Feeling.	-	- - -

If the eye has no term *peculiarly* expressive of what is in the highest degree pleasing to it, then it will be seen that the palate alone *has* such a term, and that the other four organs are entirely without, as it clearly appears there is no word we make use of at all parallel to sweet, and that can be put in a similar situation with it, as belonging properly to any of the other senses. That *sweet* does peculiarly and properly belong to the sense of tasting does not admit of a question; and it appears equally certain that Beauty as peculiarly and properly belongs to the sense of seeing. Now, although it is not yet shown that Beauty is a material thing like sweet, which is therefore an objection to the admission that Beauty and sweet are exactly parallel terms, yet it is universally allowed that Beauty properly belongs to objects of sight, even though it be applied with the propriety of custom to objects of the other senses. This has been asserted and implied by many writers. A writer in the *Ency. Brit.* remarks — “Beauty in its native signification is appropriated to objects of sight. Objects of the other senses may be agreeable, such as the sounds of musical instruments, the smoothness and softness of some surfaces; but the agreeableness called Beauty belongs to objects of sight.” In the article in the supplement to the *Ency. Brit.* the writer remarks — “The words Beauty and Beautiful are universally felt to mean something more definite than agreeableness or gratification in general.” If they meant nothing more than the pleasing, or any degree of it, they might with equal propriety be applied to all the pleasing objects of all the senses.

It is therefore assumed as a fact, without going further into the inquiry, and adopted as a proposition, that Beauty belongs properly to objects of sight. If it can be shown hereafter that Beauty is a material thing like sweet, and is as proper to the eye as sweet is to the palate, then it must be admitted that Beauty is the *highest degree of the pleasing of sight*, as sweet is the *highest degree of the pleasing of taste*. Let it be granted now for argument's sake only, and one of the most perplexing and obstinate difficulties of the question will be overcome. If we examine the two terms beautiful and sweet, we shall see that they are commonly and interchangeably used, the one for the other; there is scarcely any object to which one is applied to which the other may not be also applied with almost equal propriety: there are little shades of difference; but these hardly form an exception.

We say sweet hope, and not beautiful hope; sweet sleep, and not beautiful sleep; sweet temper; and some others are exceptions; but their identity is pretty well determined from the tautology produced

when used together; for we cannot say "sweet beauties" nor "beautiful sweets" with propriety.

Why the terms beautiful and sweet are applied to the objects and to the perceptions of the other senses must appear very evident from the view I have given of them in the table before us.

Out of the *five* senses *three* have no terms which correspond with beauty and sweet, and which express the *highest degree of the pleasing* of the respective senses to which they belong. In the communication of thoughts this must necessarily be found an immense obstacle, as we have continually to speak of the perceptions of these other senses, and of all degrees of the pleasing of each, from the lowest to the highest. The business of communication goes on pretty well when an inferior degree is to be expressed, by certain auxiliaries and little helping words which we have ready; but whenever the *superlative* degree is to be signified, the natural deficiency of our means is felt, and we borrow a term from one of those senses which we have made to express a similar degree of sensation to that we want. For instance, when we hear a singer whose *quality* of voice delights or pleases us in the *highest degree*, we may speak of that quality as being full, clear, metallic, silvery, reedy, fluty, and so on, — qualities which may be mentioned without showing whether they are calculated to please or not; but to show that we *are* pleased, and in what *degree*, we most commonly end by saying it is sweet or beautiful. Thus we make use of a figure, *because* there is no term proper to the sense of hearing, and to the degree of pleasure felt. With objects of the other senses it is the same — a term is wanted peculiar to the *highest degree of the pleasing* of each sense, and proper to it, and, in consequence of this, *one* is borrowed from a sense which possesses it, AND THUS WE ALWAYS SPEAK OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THREE OF OUR SENSES FIGURATIVELY!!

I particularly wish the inquirer to stop here, and reflect for a moment on the singular circumstance of our being compelled by the deficiency of language to speak always of this highest degree of the pleasing of *three of our senses*, by a *figure* we borrow from one of those senses which has a term proper to it, and expressive of that *highest degree*. It is to be observed that none of these epithets, such, for instance, as charming, delightful, enchanting, bewitching, lovely, exquisite, &c., are proper to *any* of the senses. But beautiful and sweet *are*, and this it is which constitutes the difference.

All the perceptions of these three senses, which amount in their intensity to what is termed the *highest degree*, it is to be observed, we have no names for. Should a voice delight us, we say it is a beautiful or a sweet voice; if it be the smell of a flower, we say it is sweet or beautiful; if it be a substance we feel very soft or highly polished, we say it is beautiful; and thus we apply, by a figure of speech, the same *name* to objects of the senses which are perfectly unlike in all the characteristics of their being.

From material we proceed to immaterial things—from objects of



the senses to objects of the mind—so that we speak of a moral excellence, an intellectual production, or a mechanical contrivance, by the same terms we employ to designate a real tangible substance. In this way the whole host of our perceptions—all that is object of our senses or subject of our thoughts—all that has power to please us to a certain extent—may come under *one* name, and be called beautiful or sweet. What an easy solution of the difficulties of the subject this is, and apparently how natural a one! but, as the inquirer will observe, this is not proved!

Let us see how the subject has been handled by the most important of the advocates for the associated scheme of Beauty. The main object of these has been to show that a great many of the objects to which the term beautiful is generally applied have no principles in common with each other (the proofs of which are not only easy in the extreme, but self-evident); and a deduction has naturally enough been made, which forms the basis of their theory, namely, that Beauty has no principles at all—no existence—and that, as Cicero has remarked, it is not to be found in the things contemplated, but in the mind that contemplates them. An attempt to classify and arrange the particulars, in which the variety of things called beautiful agree and disagree, leads most inevitably to the conclusion, that Beauty has no separate, abstract, or corporeal existence. It could not be otherwise, as we shall see, considering the manner of investigation and the course of reasoning which have been pursued—one that, however well calculated to give a plausibility to certain doctrines, does not at all events prove Beauty to have no physical principles. It ought not to be lost sight of for a moment, that there is nothing like a proof of this in the best arguments that have been produced. All that has been done is to make out a case in favour of that side of the question, which is merely rendered more easy by the superabundant difficulties of the other.

Let us turn for a moment to some of the arguments made use of for this purpose.

“The word Beauty,” says Mr. P. Knight, “is a general term of approbation of the most vague and extensive meaning, applied indiscriminately to almost every thing that is pleasing, either of the sense, the imagination, or the understanding, whatever the nature of it be, whether a material substance, or moral excellence, or an intellectual theorem. We do not, indeed, so often speak of beautiful smells or flavours, as of beautiful forms, colours, and sounds, but nevertheless we apply the epithet to a problem, a syllogism, or a period, as familiarly and (as far as we can judge from authority) as correctly as to a rose, a landscape, or a woman!” All this is pretty well known to every observing person: we certainly apply the terms Beauty and Beautiful to almost any thing that pleases us in a very high degree; but whether there be any thing “vague and extensive” in the meaning of these epithets more than belongs to figurative terms in general is a question. With regard to the word sweet, it must be seen that it

is almost as "vague and extensive" in its meaning as the word Beauty, if considered in the same way; but as a figure, it is as definite, and as well understood, as a word need be.

Mr. Burke remarks, "that men talk of Beauty in a figurative way;" that is to say, "he continues in a manner extremely uncertain and indefinite." Now it appears to me, that this is not altogether worthy of such a philosopher and a philologist as Mr. Burke, because there is certainly nothing "extremely uncertain and indefinite" in a figurative way of speaking, or in figurative expressions, for a very large portion of the language we use for the commonest purposes is made up of figures; and frequently words to which the most significant and definite meanings are attached are compounds of two figures, as in light-hearted, tender-hearted, hard-hearted, thick-headed, and a thousand other equally used and well known. In going into the philosophy of language, the fact becomes still more striking, since almost every term we use has a figurative origin or use; indeed it is so well known, that it would appear pedantic to instance and point them out.

The writer of the article in the Supplement to the *Ency. Brit.* does not appear in the slightest degree to suspect the *figurative* use of the word Beauty. After stating some objections to the possibility of Beauty being a real property of things, or the object of a peculiar sense or faculty, he proceeds to say, that a still greater objection than that he has already mentioned "is suggested by considering the prodigious and almost infinite variety of things to which this property of Beauty is ascribed (?), and the impossibility of imagining any one inherent quality which can belong to them all, and yet at the same time possess so much unity as to be the peculiar object of a separate sense or faculty."—"Take even a limited and specific sort of Beauty, for instance, the Beauty of Form. The form of a fine tree is beautiful—the form of a fine woman, and the form of a column, and of a vase, and of a chandelier. Yet how can it be said that the form of a woman has any thing in common with that of a tree, or a temple? or to which of the senses by which forms are distinguished does it appear that they have any resemblance or affinity?" He continues:—"The matter becomes still more inextricable when we recollect that Beauty does not belong [it would have been better to have said *is ascribed*] merely to forms or colours, but to sounds and perhaps to the objects of other senses."—"Not only is a tree beautiful as well as a palace or a waterfall, but a poem is beautiful, and a theorem in mathematics, and a contrivance in mechanics. But if things intellectual and totally segregated from matter may thus possess Beauty, how can it possibly be a quality of material objects?"

The writer here gets together a set of things which are only CALLED beautiful; and because these things possess no principles in common which can *possibly* make them the object of a peculiar sense, it is made the ground of an argument to show that Beauty is not a material thing and the object of a sense!

It is true enough that we are in the habit of calling all these things beautiful, but where is the proof that the term is *not* figuratively applied? It is self-evident that these things have no principle in common any more than those things which are figuratively called sweet; and there is about as much wisdom in searching for the agreement of qualities in one case as in the other. A poem certainly cannot be beautiful in the same way that a woman, a temple, or a tree, is, any more than it can be sweet in the same way that honey or sugar is; but figuratively it may be both beautiful and sweet. What an easy solution of the difficulty is this, and what an undertaking is the other — that of attempting to find some common principle in all the things, which we are in the habit of calling beautiful. To ask how it is that a beautiful woman is like a rainbow, a poem, a waterfall, a vase, a column, a moral or mental excellence, is the same thing as asking how it is that the sweet look of a child, a sweet sleep, the sound of musical glasses, &c., is like a pot of honey or a lump of sugar!

If we imagine the knowledge of the figurative use of the term sweet to be lost or confounded as that of Beauty is, and we turn seriously to the investigation of the various and differing things so called, proving by the most ingenuous arguments, and showing by the most laboured proofs, that these things have not, cannot possibly be possessed or even partake of, one common principle which can be the object of a peculiar sense or faculty, and that consequently sweet is *not* a quality of things themselves, but of the mind that contemplates such things, then I conceive we shall do by sweet exactly as has been done by Beauty. The same arguments and instances would apply in precisely the same way; and I know not but that almost as much difficulty might arise in proving sweet to be a real property of bodies as Beauty. It would be in vain perhaps to appeal to the natural test: we might give a person a sweet substance, and say, Taste that, and tell me if it is not sweet? Sweet! he would reply: certainly not; to me it is disagreeable, and sweet according to the opinion of the world is something *agreeable*, as Beauty is: then taking from his pocket a roll of tobacco, or a lump of opium, he would say, This is my sweet, the other may be yours. Sweet is not a perception of the senses but of the mind.

"Sweet" (he would say, as Mr. Hume has said of Beauty) "is no quality in things themselves; it exists merely in the mind that contemplates them." Each mind perceives a different sweet — one person may even be *sensible* of sour or bitter when another is *sensible* of sweet; and every individual ought to acquiesce in his own sentiments without pretending to regulate those of others. It is fortunate for us, in speaking of a sweet child, a sweet temper, and so on, that a well-known physical quality of substances is referred to, otherwise the subject would afford equal scope for the talents, subtilties, and the labour of writers as Beauty has done, and admit of as many theories, without perhaps one attempt to solve difficulties so perplexing by the figurative use of the term.

I may here again remark, that, among writers on the subject, the

most *popular* notion respecting Beauty is, that it depends entirely upon the associative power of the mind, and consists in the suggestion of certain agreeable and interesting sensations with which we have been formerly made familiar by the direct agency of our common sensibilities. It must appear a very extraordinary thing, then, that if this notion of Beauty be correct, the eye has no organic faculty of receiving pleasure *like the other senses*. The palate is regaled with an endless variety of flavours, the nose with as many perfumes, and the ear is delighted with an infinite variety of sounds: many things are agreeable to the touch; but the eye has no single pleasurable sensation but that which it obtains through the intervention of the mind !!! Let a disciple of the associative scheme dwell on this fact, and ask himself if it had ever struck him before, whether it was present to his thoughts when he made up his mind that there was no such thing as physical beauty. Let him ask how it is that no anatomist or physiologist has ever mentioned so singular a fact, and how it is that those who have an hypothesis of this nature to support should never have made the direct use of a fact so singular and so well adapted to their purpose, but have left their argument supported *only* by the *inference* of so advantageous a circumstance. Let us reflect upon the fact that, according to this theory, it is a matter of no importance whatever into what parts of the area of a face the eyes, nose, and mouth are put as long as you preserve the human character; that the colours, and lights, and darks of a picture may be placed any where with equal effect as regards them physically. In a *bouquet* of flowers, wherever you place the red flowers or the white, the blue, the yellow, orange, purple, and so on, it is the same thing. The *mind* arranges and adjusts all such *assumed* discrepancies as the *material* system denounces or approves — the senses have nothing whatever to do with the matter: it is not the eye that sees, but the mind that contemplates, from which Beauty comes!

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 AN EVENING'S GOSSIP WITH A PAINTER.

(Continued from p. 219.)

*Palette and Chatworthy in conversation.*

*Chat.* Then you think, Palette, that Art owes its advancement, and its present welfare, to the good feeling and good sense of society, and *not* to its judgment and taste?

*Pal.* Most certainly; it is this same good feeling and good sense combined which first made it *friends*, and then *patrons*, and which will ultimately, no doubt, create *men of taste*.

*Chat.* And you think the operation of this machinery, under the superintendence of the painters, will raise Art to the highest pitch of excellence it is capable of attaining?

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*Pal.* The highest it has ever reached has been effected by such means: and when it is reflected upon how *limited* these means were, there is abundant reason to believe that their *extension* would do more than has ever yet been done.

*Chat.* I recollect, in your paper read at the meeting of the Artists' Institute, you make the success of Art to hinge upon the joint efforts and influence of the painter and the patron, which you there denominate the *Mutual Faculty*, and which appears to me rather a new view of the subject.

*Pal.* Perhaps it is so. Those great events I cited from history had clearly no influence upon Art: but there must have been a cause, as well as a consequence; and it appears to me, that no one is calculated to produce such mighty results as the influence I have called the *Mutual Faculty*; indeed, its operation involves the exertion of the only means by which the Artist can be assisted. Chemistry cannot make honey, although it may be competent to the analysis of its component parts; neither can excellence in Art be produced but by the direct agency of the Artist: he is the *bee*; patronage may be said to furnish the *verdure* and the *flowers*: but the honey must be his own peculiar production, in the elaboration of which no assistance can be given him.

*Chat.* Without this supply, then, the graphic hive would contain nothing of consequence; but being made, *taste* is supplied from it, is dependent upon it—in short, could not exist or be without it.

*Pal.* That is certainly my impression, although I know many authorities are against it. I know very well there is an opinion, not uncommon, that taste is a faculty *sui generis*,—a kind of intellectual jackal, sent forth as a purveyor for Art, without which it would starve and die; that certain men possess a gift from heaven, by which they are enabled to see, at a glance, all the painter labours so hard and so long to know. An opinion of this kind has long existed; but, as Lady Callcott has said, "It required the fostering hand of German enthusiasm to publish it as an axiom to the world, and to write books upon the absurd notion, that those who know nothing practically of a subject are the best judges and instructors concerning it."

*Chat.* Perhaps you give too much consequence to the joint operation of mere good feeling and good sense, and too little to a faculty which it is common to consider as existing quite independent of Art, and which has been regarded as a natural endowment or gift from heaven.

*Pal.* Why, Chatworthy, it is clear that much is done by the mere force of natural gifts, because, by them, men are fitted with peculiar faculties for the acquirement of knowledge: but I think it will be difficult to show, or to believe, that knowledge itself is, in any instance, the direct gift of heaven; on the contrary, there are many forms in the maxims of wisdom and experience which assert, unequivocally, that knowledge is only granted to man as the reward of labour and study; and I know no reason for believing that nature has made an exception in favour of Art. I can form no notion how a man should know any thing of pictures who has not studied or given the smallest portion of attention to the principles upon which they are constructed,—the end of Art, or the aim of the Artist. It is impossible to know the value of any single specimen produced without knowing something of what has been achieved in a similar way, and in similar objects. We are not sent to Egypt, Greece, and Rome to study Art in our own proper persons before we come into this world, in which

study is a condition of knowledge. Some *mystics* have admitted that such might be the case ; but it is now pretty generally allowed, that the exercise of the *senses*, by which knowledge is collected, must be put off until the possession of them.

*Chat.* Yes ; I am inclined to believe that we come into this world with so little knowledge, that if we have previously been anywhere else it has been to very little purpose : but, surely, when a man does come here he learns to use his eyes ; and this use of them enables him to judge whether the representation of an object by means of Art be like the object itself or not.

*Pal.* You are an old friend, Chatty, and a very worthy fellow ; and it grieves me that I am obliged to deny you even thus much ground to stick an argument upon endways. But take it if you like, and say that people *do* learn to use their eyes, upon the strength of which they set up pretensions to taste. The employment of eyes is certainly necessary to the end of the painter ; but that constitutes but a very small portion of the faculty which is most important to the man of taste. Art which is of any value addresses itself to the mind, to the intelligence of man, and not simply to his organs of sight. That perceptiveness which enables a man to compare the pictured resemblance of a thing with the thing itself is the very lowest order of qualification ; and that which is so lamentable a misfortune to Art is, that it is rarely found to go higher. But even this natural qualification demands much more cultivation than is commonly given to fit it for the service it has to perform. Painters represent nature as they *LEARN* to see her : does not this imply the necessity of some *study* on the part of those who are spectators of their works ? It is the lowest sort of acquaintance with the aim of the painter to suppose that his study and his efforts tend to nothing but the representation of objects through imitation, and that this constitutes the difficulties of his Art. The difficulty is not in imitating the likeness of things, but in the selection of the things themselves, and in the *mode* of rendering their resemblance. Now this, the mere use of eyes, will not teach at all ; it is now an appeal to intelligence. The mere resemblance of things may be compared to the placing of the men on a chess-board : there they are ready to be employed ; and the first step in artistical knowledge, like the first move of the chess-player, demands some portion of the intelligence which belongs to the game. Simple and trivial as this fact is, it is painful to say that people require to be told it still.

*Chat.* *Apropos* to that, Palette. I have often wondered why pictures produced by the Daguerrotype, which must, as a matter of course, render nature faithfully, should be so insipid and unsatisfactory.

*Pal.* As regards one particular point, you have hit on the happiest illustration possible. When the Daguerrotype first made its appearance it was thought that Art would never after be able to show its face ; but the result proves the direct converse of the fact. Resemblances given by the Daguerrotype are the kind of resemblances which it is commonly supposed the painter labours to produce, and in which the difficulties of his operations are supposed to reside. But they show clearly that the work of the painter has something more in it than the bare resemblance of the thing : it is *that something* which springs from, although no exalted example, the intelligence spoken of, in conception, treatment, and execution. Beyond this point, it is very rare indeed that the cultivation of the Amateur extends, while that of the public hardly comes up to it. This is the veritable *pons asinorum* of most people who, what they call, "learn to draw ;" the which learning I have generally observed to be an effectual check to

any and every thing that deserves the name of *knowledge of Art*, which, by the way, it utterly prevents, by supplying something that stands in the place of it. No people are more devoid of that knowledge so essentially requisite in the skill that *exercises*, and the taste that *judges*, than those who have learnt to "draw a little:" they stagnate upon mere imitation; Art is to them nothing else. Their knowledge of Art has no participation with the pure and speculative truths of its philosophy, the elements of its beauties and excellences, the theory of its appliances, nor with the higher principles of its practice: Art is to them but a few lines and colours so embraced as to create *resemblances*, and here it ends.

*Chat.* I think that a little severe, although it may be true: but I should like to know in this condition of things, taking the great mass who know nothing of Art, and the few who dabble in it for the sole purpose, it would appear, of knowing *less*, how it happens that Art has found succour and support, friends and patrons, as you state: I should wish to know where this good comes from?

*Pal.* From that portion of pure, natural, and unsophisticated feeling which is still to be found — the native ore of the purified metal TASTE, and the plain good household understanding of the people at large.

*Chat.* I don't see that point clearly, Palette. I know it is commonly said that ignorant people, servants, and children, are the best judges of Art. Some Frenchman I know used to read his plays to his cook; and I have seen a man's portrait put down to be recognised by his dog.

*Pal.* I have seen pictures put to a far more degrading test. The notion regarding the judgment of ignorant people is only a compliment paid to the qualification I speak of, and a proof of the truth of what I assert. Servants and children are not likely to have been taught any thing: if they had, there would be every chance it would have been worse than nothing. It is impossible, however, that any thing can be more absurd and false than such a notion: next to the highest authorities in Art are the pure, natural, untainted, highly educated, and intelligent *few*. It is a point which has been overlooked in every system of education, and scarcely even *named* by any, that A GREAT PART OF EVERY REFINED ACQUISITION IS THE CONSERVATION OF WHAT IS INHERENT AND NATURAL IN US,—the *purification*, and not entirely the cultivation of the mind. Nobody appears to think of this, or to suspect that what they are attempting to learn, or have learnt, may stand in the way of that they ought to know. I don't believe there is a conscientious man in existence who, whilst in the pursuit of excellence, did not find more obstructions thrown in his way by the error he had imbibed than by the excellence he sought. Let me tell you, my old friend, it is not so easy a matter to paint up to the thoughts of refined and intelligent people, nor to the feelings and perceptions of those who are natural, and devoid of pretension, even though they know nothing of the canons of criticism, the rules and the practice of Art. It is easy enough to beguile the half-learned connoisseur of his applause, and no uncommon thing to take advantage of his weakness; a *tint*, a *touch*, or a *texture*, will always be enough to entrap him, as it offers a sop to his vanity, and allows him an occasion of making a display of the little knowledge he has acquired, to the exclusion of what is more important. But it is useless to make this appeal to the intelligent; it is like attempting to amuse the man with the playthings of the child: what he is capable of feeling is of the highest order; what you offer him, in the other case, is of the lowest.

*Chat.* Well; but if such people are calculated to benefit Art in one way,

the impressions which they often receive must necessarily tend to injure it in another. If painters present them with a species of production, the mere result of mechanical druggery instead of mental exertion, and then expect that they are to be admitted to the honours of a liberal profession, they will find themselves, not only disappointed, but degraded into the bargain.

*Pal.* No doubt the thing is just as you state it; and the chance is, that right-thinking persons will much sooner learn to distinguish between Artists than Artists will learn to reform their practice, and recommend their Art and themselves to the respect of those whose respect alone is worth having.

*Chat.* This appears to me a reasonable view of the matter, and just brings us back to the main proposition, and the considerations it involves. All the good which has been done to Art has come from the natural good feeling and good sense of society.

*Pal.* Which is just calculated to carry Art to a certain extent, and no further; just as the natural nourishment of the mother sustains the child, but is unequal to the necessities of the man.

*Chat.* Yes; and what is required is a something that will add its force to natural powers, and aid in that refinement which comes by a good general education; which something is artistical knowledge, and which, when added to the rest, will form and complete the character of the man of taste.

*Pal.* The only real and efficient patron of Art.

*Chat.* After which, supposing the operation of the compound to be certain and effective when it is made, how are the means by which it is to be constructed to be got at? I see, in an article in your Sixth Number, headed "Education in Art," which is given in reply to some communication received, that you leave the inquiry in the lurch, and as much in the dark as ever.

*Pal.* No, not quite; I show at least what are the right means, and offer a proof of the truth of them in the results. I show how Artists can be and are made, and *attempt* to show that it is *artistical* knowledge which alone is necessary to form the kind of agent and the agency required. I am sorry I cannot point directly to any means which can be made available at the pleasure of those disposed to seek and adopt it.

*Chat.* Suppose you were to open a school for adults, or a lecture-room, although I regard lectures as a bad mode of teaching, because the mode must be modified to the individual. I think something of the sort might be made useful. Did not Barry, in one of his addresses to the public, offer to instruct any young nobleman or gentleman who might wish to avail themselves of his knowledge of Art?

*Pal.* Yes; he called, but did they come? Did you ever hear that any one went to him?

*Chat.* There is a great difference in the condition of the times, as you know well enough; Art was then but very little respected. It has certainly gained of late years both in friends and in consequence, although perhaps not in the *ratio* of its merits; but there is a little *break* in the sky; a bit of the *blue* is to be seen: it is not so complete and compact a canopy of clouds as it was.

*Pal.* None can regard that circumstance with more grateful feelings than painters.

*Chat.* I don't know that, Palette; the sluggish apathy and passive indifference which mark the conduct of the mass, is no proof of a lively feel-



ing or any great concern about the interest of Art; and, I am sorry to say, the practice of many looks very like hanging a wet blanket or cramming a paint-rag into the opening!

*Pal.* Don't be scurrilous, Chatty.

*Chat.* Well, let us see you do something. Invite us to your studios, show us your pictures, and then read us or give us a homily upon Art. This is exactly in accordance with what you have recommended yourself, and what you assert to be the soul of artistic welfare — *a free and liberal intercourse between the patron and the painter*. From your own showing, all men who have been distinguished in the ranks of taste, are men who have not disdained to hold a free communication with artists, and who, in so doing, have acquired that information which could not be obtained in any other way. Now, as the forms and constitution of society cannot be changed to suit any particular object or any class of interests, is it not possible to invent some method by which we may be made partakers of what we so much require, without seeking directly a personal intercourse with artists, who have no time to spare generally, and who may not feel disposed to communicate what they know either for love or money? From whom are we to seek information for ourselves and our families? If the better class of artists will not give us instruction, the worse must and will; so that there is little chance of amendment for us. Is there no remedy?

*Pal.* The establishment of professorships at the two universities, and in all the important institutions of learning in the country, would do much; but it requires an artistical education in the authorities, from whose mandate such a mighty change must emanate, to enable them to see the necessity and the advantage of it; and from what source is that likely to come?

*Chat.* Many a noble project, which is properly the object of a nation, has originated in private enterprise. Painters will by and by awaken to the necessity of opening a communication with the world on the mysteries of Art; and then I have no doubt the means will present themselves. I see you contend that instruction begun early in life is useless; so that, in a system upon your plan, time and money might be spared for many of the first years of life, and of course the more might be expended when the proper time arrives; and as a short period would then be sufficient, something might be gained in both.

*Pal.* No doubt of it; a youth from sixteen to twenty would learn more in one year than a child in seven: no child has ever been found equal to any important acquisition or operation in Art.

*Chat.* You seem to think that the exercise of Art requires no cultivation of the bones and muscles, as in music and dancing, for instance?

*Pal.* Certainly not; it is the mind which must be taught to know, and when that is done, the eye and the hand are soon made obedient. But it is not positively a practical knowledge of Art which is indispensable, although the practice greatly facilitates the study. It is sound, just, and elevated notions of Art — a knowledge of its nature and attributes — a sense of its value and importance, influence, and claims as a great moral agent that are so desirable, and which an individual may continue to *draw* all the days of his life, without even obtaining a glimpse.

*Chat.* Reading, one would suppose, might convey something of the necessary information.

*Pal.* Yes, if there were the necessary books, and the inclination to read them; but, for this object, the advantage of so doing must be made apparent; and this is no small difficulty, particularly when, as you said just now

people cannot bear to be told of their ignorance, even though it is not their own fault. I certainly have not vanity sufficient to believe that my feeble voice will reach the ears of the whole community; but I still hope, that by such efforts as I am making, a few by and by will rouse themselves and become an example to others, and thus that the cause of Art will be benefited. I must say, Chatworthy, I am often perfectly astonished, when I reflect on the apathy generally exhibited on the subject of Art as an article of education. Habit has so completely fixed upon society an impression that Art requires no study for its comprehension, and that all the world are born with a knowledge of pictures, that the natural and common sensibilities of the mind are completely blunted, so that any attempt to excite and stir them is considered impertinent and found hopeless. If a man has not been a reader of books, it is a novelty to find him making pretensions to an acquaintance with literature; but as regards Art, the thing is quite different; the whole mass of the community appear to change their character, their nature and attributes, their common feelings, and their common sense, and upon one subject only it is impossible to reach either their heads or their hearts. The *influence* which induces a man who has never given one hour's attention to the subject, who has never read a book, heard a discourse, or picked up one authorised opinion, to assume a knowledge and a taste in the productions of Art, is to me as wonderful a phenomenon as any that is to be found in the whole world of mind and matter. When I see fine young men and women, capable of the best impressions, growing up into a condition in which they will be called upon to exercise their minds and perceptions, and to make deductions from what they see, hear, and feel, divested of the slightest guide or information in the grandest and most comprehensive departments of taste, I sometimes ask myself how long it is possible such a state of things can continue? how long the same parents and guardians, who look with solicitude to their moral culture, the expansion and refinement of their minds, will consent to leave one of the great agents adapted to these mighty ends entirely unemployed, and one grand portion of the mind an utter blank? It appears to me perfectly astonishing how people, who watch with anxiety every means which *promises* good, should still overlook Art. One would suppose that its character as a pleasing recreation and a mere toy, which may be used or neglected at pleasure, was so completely fixed, that nobody had a doubt about it, or can possibly conceive one. In other matters, when a voice reaches the world from out of any of the wilds and wastes of ignorance, a few will stop in their accustomed career to listen; and it is possible that the enthusiasts who call and who offer themselves as teachers, may obtain a short-lived attention; but, unhappily, if Art be their subject, they call in vain. Apart from the suggestions of mind, there is *another* monitor, the operations of which give a sense of the obligations due to those men, and to those objects, and to those pursuits, which, it is said, have a tendency to benefit mankind, and which have in all times and places had the sanction and received the homage of the wisest and the best: is it not singular that *this*, which occupies the most sacred recesses of the human heart, is ever present with men in their deepest contemplation, and, even associated with their welfare beyond the mere limits of life, should not stir them to look a little into the matter offered to their consideration? How is it that no parent says to himself — Is the knowledge and the employment of Art beneficial beyond the mere representation of objects? Did I learn any thing by the system of tuition to which I was submitted, and do I act as a parent ought in submitting the

interests of my children to a similar one? If Art be what some represent it, am I acting well to leave those whose welfare is dear to me ignorant of it? Will my own ignorance furnish me with a sufficient excuse? Have I taken any pains to learn whether Art be really worth studying or not? Have I acted by this subject as by most others? Have I ever attempted to inform my own mind, and thus to estimate what I owe to others, by making inquiry, and by reading what men, who have devoted their lives to the study, have written? Have I not been carried away, and my understanding borne down by the current of common notions, when I ought to have acted independently and thought for myself? To me, Chatworthy, it is anomalous and marvellous how persons, who exercise their minds and employ their conscience in every thing else, should neglect both, as regards the necessity of studying Art.

*Chat.* You spoke just now of an *influence* operating to produce the evils of which you complain.

*Pal.* Certainly; the *influence of habit*; individuals can scarcely be charged with a delinquency, when it is apparent they yield but to an influence which affects the whole community.

*Chat.* I think, Palette, nevertheless, that you have made out rather a strong case against us, and with that show of justice, too, which it is not easy to palliate, and may be well to reflect upon: for myself I am a convert, and whenever you found a sect, reckon me among your followers. Don't despise my advice, Palette; set up an institution of artistic instruction, or open your house, and get a dozen or two well-conditioned young people about you, who may *learn* how to become patrons of Art; or old people, for you say it is never too late to begin; and make a beginning: some will follow your example, and in a few years we shall have a new and improved race of amateurs and patrons.

*Pal.* Some ten years ago I actually contemplated such a project, and went so far as to write and to print the prospectus of a plan of instruction, which at some time or other I will show you, but which——

*Chat.* Was never put forth: I thought so. This is exactly of a piece with all that is done by the whole body of the *genus* to which *professionally* you belong; no men are so "infirm of purpose;" none who can depend so little upon themselves, or—upon whom others can depend.

*Pal.* We are exceedingly obliged to you, Chatty; but the success of an enterprise does not *always* depend upon firmness of purpose; for sometimes the fate of a battle rests upon the means of sustaining a siege, in which personal prowess has nothing to do. In this wide world of ours, a man must have *some* interest now who aspires to sweep a crossing; and as regards a matter of little import or convenience to the public, a large number of friends are necessary and indispensable; without them nothing whatever is to be done; and they must be active and powerful into the bargain. I remember I pleased myself some time with the project. I meant to associate with me as many intelligent persons as I could find, whose sphere of knowledge was in any degree allied to Art. I thought of asking such of my acquaintance as I could, who might be painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, and so on, who, in a little meeting made up of agreeable and knowledge-seeking persons, would freely communicate their thoughts and opinions as they might be suggested by the objects present and peculiar of their several pursuits; and thus information and instruction would be given and gained without the formalities usually attendant upon them, and in a way calculated to leave a lasting impression. For I have always observed,

that information associated with the individual who renders it, or the place where it is received, or any other circumstance, is always of an effective character; upon the principle, I suppose, that memory itself is based upon association, and that the recollection of things will only keep company with each other by being coupled together. As a more serious *divertimento*, I meant every month or every fortnight to read a lecture, or give a discourse upon the mysteries of Art, both in theory and practice; and in order to encourage the latter, I meant to place easels and palettes of colour, brushes, pencils, and paper, in the way of any who might like to use them; for I think there is far more to be done by putting *temptation* before people than can be effected either by force or persuasion. Some practical knowledge would be gained by those who were merely lookers-on, and more still by those who might have courage to try and to submit to the remarks they would hear. I thought I would ask a friend I *then* had to come and model a small figure in clay, and another to give some little insight into anatomy, or the general structure of the figure. I meant, of course, not only to show my own pictures as well as my opinions, but to do something better, and to borrow those of my friends, and exhibit them in all states of progress, and in all conditions of forwardness, from the sketch to the finished work. And thus I hoped to be instrumental in disseminating good and correct notions of Art, knowing well that the esteem in which the Fine Arts are held can only be consequent and proportionate to the degree in which they are understood; all else must be false adulation, empty pretension, and fallacious expectation.

*Chat.* Well, Palette, it is a pity such an agreeable scheme should fall to the ground; but it would require a good many adjuncts to put it and keep it together. You were then rather nearer your days of romance, which, judging from recent acts, it can't be said you are yet quite out of the influence of, although a little farther removed. I have always been in the habit of forming my own opinion of things from my own impressions; and although no great contemner of the world in a general way, I must say its neglect of the study of Art—its yielding so quietly to a system of education which evidently produces nothing, is a singular instance of inattention to an important subject, or what a sufficient number of persons, who ought to know, declare to be an important subject, to say the least of it. I don't at all believe what I have so often wrung in my ears, that the public have no taste or liking for any thing but utter trash, in every thing and in every way. If you talk to a publisher of books or prints, he will tell you that nothing but trash, or a certain kind of production, will suit the public: if to a music-seller or a musician, both will tell you that such and such things are *too good* for the public; and I suppose painters paint pictures upon the same principle. I don't see that it must, of necessity, be the *vulgus ad captandum* in every thing, although I can easily understand the motives of certain people that lead them to make the appeal, and to neglect every other. Yet I don't think this ought entirely to deter a man from attempting what is recommended by probity and some probability.

*Pal.* I remember when this project first laid hold of me, I had just returned after a sojourn of a few years in France, where I had become strongly impressed with the fact of the facilities afforded to the community at large in learning to draw, and that not in the false and feeble manner of teaching adopted in this country, but by real good and authentic examples of Art—from collections, more or less perfect, of fine plaster casts; the

consequence of which is, that a more general feeling for good things in Art is disseminated, and, with this, some practical knowledge founded upon good principles.

*Chat.* Oh, of course ; France is in advance of us in every thing—painters, fiddlers, fighters — every thing.

*Pal.* No, you patriotic snarler ; I don't mean to say that. Although I am sorry to say a sufficient number of our acts look as if there were a prevalent and almost a national feeling in favour of exotic things, no country has paid so high a price for foreign talent, or so much neglected native. I recollect a circumstance coming to my notice in an odd way, which is a singular proof of this, and a deplorable instance of the want of artistical knowledge, which is at once its explanation and excuse. You know, Chatty, I have had some strange adventures ; and once upon a time being at *Mont Cassel (Artois), France*, I made a visit to a convent of Trappist monks, the which convent is very prettily situated upon the top of a tolerably high hill, at a spot once inhabited by an ancient people of Germany, called the *Catti*, and from which the French have very *appropriately* named it *Mont des Chats*, with a good deal of that romance which you are pleased to laugh at, and which I value still as my best possession, although the world has contrived to deprive me of a part of it, for which I give it no thanks. I first approached a convent, and rung the bell of a small garden door, by pulling gently and somewhat timidly at the small cross which hung at the end of it. Presently a slide, which covered a small grating, was pushed slowly aside, and I saw through the bars a large pair of grey eyes, a fine prominent nose, and a shaggy pair of eyebrows. I was going to speak, but the wicket was at once shut and the door opened, and bowing almost to the ground was the tall form of an oldish monk, dressed in a coarse brown habit, with a black kind of tippet or *scapularium*. It was the *porteur*. As he rose slowly up to his full height about six feet two, I thought I never saw so magnificent a creature ; and such a head I certainly never did see. Talk of idealising, talk of mending nature when it is nature—nonsense ; but I will show you the cast I made from it, which hangs in the other room, and you shall judge for yourself. It was a minute before I could recover my surprise, and before I could speak ; but judging, I suppose, that I wished like other sightseers to see the convent, he made me a sign, asking me to be silent and to follow him. I was received by the brother whose business it is to welcome strangers, to whom I explained myself as well as I could, and after a quarter of an hour the prior made his appearance. I expected to see a stern old chap who might object to a project which had just taken possession of me, which was to make a *study* of the porter ; but, to my astonishment, there stood before me a young, ruddy, handsome, agreeable-looking fellow of about thirty, with a face full of goodnature, gaiety, and welcome. He shook hands with me cordially ; knew I was an Englishman, of course ; and asked me how long I was come to stay with him ; told me there was a bed and a table at my service ; that although they all drank water, lived on vegetables, and had little even of those, he had excellent wine, and there were chickens and eggs in abundance. As soon as he knew my object, he seemed more gratified still, and offered to sit himself if I liked. This was not precisely what I wanted, but it was sure to lead to it, so that I made arrangements for bringing my traps next day in order to set to work, and for the present contented myself with discussing various matters, in addition to a capital bottle of Bordeaux, a bunch of grapes, and a *hunch* of delicious bread. You

won't suppose, Chatty, that I missed the occasion offered me. I painted the prior, who expressed his satisfaction that we should both go down to posterity together; the porter a dozen times, and others of the silent fraternity often. I think I must have been backwards and forwards at this convent for six months at least. I was locked up with the rest when it was shut in the evening at seven o'clock, and rose when I pleased.

*Chat.* Rather a melancholy life, I should imagine.

*Pal.* Yes, but yet not unattended with pleasure of a peculiar kind. I don't know how it was I courted the solitude that oppressed me, and the monotony that wearied me. At first, on being shut up in my cell, I had no candle or lamp allowed me; the only light that burnt under the roof glimmered at the altar in the little chapel; so I made the best of what heaven allowed me, and read or wrote whilst it lasted. I then amused myself by watching the extending shadow of the mountain upon which the convent stood creep by little and little over the valley and the plain until it died away in the distance. Sometimes I amused myself with my guitar; and when I went to bed, making a curtain of my *blouse*, I opened the window a little, and putting the guitar into the space where it would act by the help of the breeze as an *Æolian harp*, I left it to amuse me and went to sleep.

*Chat.* Most lugubrious and romantically flat, stale, dull, and unprofitable. You seem to have forgotten the circumstance bearing upon Art.

*Pal.* Not a bit of it; but a man must tell his story in his own way. Often the scene has changed to one of a very different character. As I have sat quietly alone, I have heard a light footstep and a gentle tap at the door —

*Chat.* There was not a nunnery in the neighbourhood, was there?

*Pal.* And going to see, I have found the prior with his finger upon his lips, a lamp in his hand, and under his arm a *litre* bottle of stout Bordeaux, and a face full of half-suppressed fun and drollery. Now he would say, "The whole house sleeps, like one large fish; I am come to regale your spirits with a glass of wine and some talk, which will do neither of us any harm; *pinch* your guitar, and I will sing you a little song." Many a pleasant evening was passed in this way: all at once, starting upon his feet, he would say, "Eh bien, Monsieur Reepeenjeel, I must not forget that the last man in bed in the house must be first up in the morning; so *bon soir et bonne nuit*."

*Chat.* Well, I am glad he is gone to bed; now tell us what you intended.

*Pal.* Upon one of these occasions, after we had become more familiar, the prior asked if we had many painters of merit in England. My reply was, of course, that we had as many and as good as were to be found elsewhere. "Well," he observed, "that is very puzzling to me; because this monastery was built by a painter, who was a native of a small town just by, and who made a large fortune in your country, where he was many years." Quite possible; in what way? "He was drawing-master to the princesses royal — the daughters of George the Third." I looked, of course, a little incredulous for the moment, which the prior saw, and observed, smiling, "It is true, I assure you; and what makes the thing still more curious is, that he was the worst dauber, perhaps, in existence, and the most ignorant man: he could speak no language — neither Flemish nor French; and as for *ideas*, he had not two to rub together." A high character, father prior, certainly. "It is a true one," he replied; "but I will show you some of his pictures to-morrow, and you shall judge of his talent as a

painter. When he returned from England, he laid the foundation of this monastery, and lived to see it completed, or nearly so. It was a remark of his, that he had lived in palaces with the rulers of nations, and that he would die in a *hut*. This promise he literally kept, for he had a small shed built near, at a place I will show you, so as to witness the building of this convent as it proceeded; and there he lived, and there he died. He endowed this house with nearly all the wealth he had; and, as a farther benefit, he left us a great many of his pictures, directing that they should be sold at his death. We expected they would fetch a good sum; but on sending them to *Antwerp* for sale, they would not sell at all; no one would bid a *sous* for them, "*pas un liard, rien de tout*." The prior saw that I still suspected some mistake, so taking up the lamp in his hand, he said, "Follow me; *allons!*" We descended the stairs, and after winding along many dark passages, he led me into a small chapel, and holding up the light and pointing to a tablet upon the wall, I read the following inscription: —

Sépulture

De M. NICOLAS JOSEPH RUYSEN,

Né à Hazebroek la 26 Mars, 1757, fils de Nicolas et de Monique Maes,

Peintre d'Histoire, Elève des E'coles de Paris et de Rome,

Professeur de Dessin des Princesses Royales

d'Angleterre sous George III.

Fondateur du présent Monestère de la Maison Dieu de la Trappe,

Au Mont des Cats décédé au dit Mont le 7 Mai, 1826.

R. in pace.

Of course I offer this inscription as a proof of the truth of the prior's representation, knowing nothing more of the fact than what these afford. I saw and examined the works of this lucky man, and I must say it would be difficult to find any more lamentably wretched and devoid of all artistical tact, knowledge, and feeling. As I overhauled them in a kind of lumber loft, where they were placed, I was struck with the deplorable taste which could recommend, adopt, and place such a man in a situation in which a clever one might have done a world of good, and in which *he* could only effect immense mischief. Fancy the minds, feelings, and perceptions of these ladies — the highest personages in the nation — whose influence and example would be felt by all, put under the control of a fellow utterly ignorant of every rule of Art, and every principle of taste!

*Chat.* Deplorable, indeed, Palette.

## MODERN PAINTERS;

THEIR SUPERIORITY IN THE ART OF LANDSCAPE PAINTING TO ALL  
THE ANCIENT MASTERS, ETC.

BY A GRADUATE OF OXFORD.

THAT this work is possessed of more than the ordinary merits, may be fairly judged by the many public notices it has received, and by the variety of opinions it has called forth. If a reviewer were resolved to do by the *book* what the author has done by the *Artist* (he has chosen and made illustration of all that is new and excellent in Art), he might find some difficulty in maintaining his ground, and in making good its claim to perfection. No praise goes to such an extent, nor can any investigation or just censure reduce it to the standard of an ordinary production. It is, taking it with all its defects, by far the most intelligent, philosophic, and comprehensive work on the subject of Art that has issued from the press of the present day. Its bare object, setting aside the ability displayed in it, is one of a novel and a praiseworthy character, since it advocates a beautiful branch of Art, which has not met with its full share of consideration, or found an advocate anywhere of equal pretensions and importance.

Mr. Pyne has very justly observed, that "the writers upon the subject of the Art of Design have been, in every instance, either historical or portrait painters; and however successfully and fairly they have asserted the merits of their own pursuits, they have left untouched or neglected those of landscape painting."\* The grand and distinguishing merit of this work is, that it attempts to lead the inquirer to conclusions through principles; and still more than this, it aspires to show the source of these, in the phenomena which refers them to the innate faculties of man, and does not leave them dependant upon the deductions merely of experiment. It is a very shallow philosophy, although a very common one, which deduces principles from mere practice, and treats them simply as the maxims of experience; yet this is the utmost of what is found in works devoted to the

\* It would be unjust to pass unnoticed those pleasing Essays on this branch of Art which have appeared in "Blackwood's Magazine," under the title of the "Sketcher:" they are well calculated to excite a love for nature, a regard for Art, and to give an impulse to taste; and it is to be regretted that the author, himself practically acquainted with Art, did not accompany them with an explanation of principles proper to the study and the practice of the Artist and the Amateur.



elucidation of Art; it is a variety, indeed, if more than bare deductions are given, mere loose inferences from common-place facts, vague speculation, and unsupported dogma.

Notwithstanding all that has been done by the clever minds which have been devoted to the cause of Art, as to its claims and influence as a human good, or in explanation of its principles theoretically and practically, its *philosophy* has been left untouched. One hails, therefore, with a grateful welcome, a work which takes up this long neglected and difficult branch of the subject; and if our full approbation cannot be given to the execution of what is undertaken, we can afford, and ought to give, praise to the undertaking itself. As a book of definitions, simply, this work is entitled to high consideration, and may be turned to good account both by the professional and the general student. It is a work which cannot fail to excite the imagination of the aspirant, and to direct his mind to the contemplation of a wide field of study, and especially to give a high idea of the *resources* of Art, if it be only from the *grand inventory* of excellences which it names. It is believed, too, that this is the best species of instruction which can be offered, taking into consideration the nature of the thing to be studied and achieved, and the qualifications necessary for the undertaking. It is the best, because nothing more can be done; for it is clearly of little use to give directions for the attainment of excellences, when it is seen that in practice every Artist finds a road for himself—when he follows another, he is no longer excellent. Little more, therefore, remains for a monitor and guide in Art than to give a list of its treasures, leaving the aspirant to take his own course in finding them. It is not meant that nothing whatever can be done to farther and facilitate his search; but this relates to subordinate matters—the baser metals are to be found in the beaten tracks, the gold lies in regions untrodden, and he who finds it must go by himself, he can have no conductor.

As regards the execution of the task the author has taken upon himself, it is not to be expected that so wide a field of speculation and inquiry could be occupied with equal strength every where, especially when it is considered how little aid precedent affords. Most other subjects of equal importance offer ample *data*, the result of *foregone* efforts; but in Art very little indeed of this sort of encouragement or aid is to be obtained. The whole work is clearly the production of an ardent, philosophic, observant, and cogitative mind; and, what is matter of exultation, if of no other consequence, it is the production of a *practical painter*—indeed it could be the production of no other. As it is written in the language of *enthusiasm* it must be read by enthusiasts, or it cannot escape censure, nor will it be always intelligible even then, much less to the ordinary reader: and it is impossible to defend parts of it which strongly incline to the mystical. There is a pure and a powerful vein of poetry pervading it which often gives beauty and force, but every now and then this loses itself,

and runs a little into pedantry and obscurity — there is certainly a little too much of the pride of erudition displayed, too much of scholastic parade, too much of the scholar, and too little of the man. The same powers left to themselves would have been worth more; but by this they are distinguished from the ordinary kind, which are made up of what it would *here* be advantageous to lose: the same mind left to itself would have been that of the poet — it has shifted its natural dependency, and suffers in proportion. The author has clearly thought a great deal and to good purpose, and has as evidently learnt to depend upon himself. There is a large portion of the work which looks like the production of one self-taught, and perhaps rather estranged from general intercourse; many points are laboured, which are simple to the initiated, and put forth with the importance of discoveries; but although insignificant in themselves, they are mostly rendered in a manner which give them a consequence. In other parts, some of the deepest mysteries of nature, and the most subtle attributes of art, are unveiled and illustrated with a masterly hand — with a form and clearness which shows a perfect acquaintance with the subject, and a full command over the means of communicating what is known. Very many particulars are thus rendered striking and beautiful; many *are*, and others, by the treatment they receive, appear to be new.

The attempt to disprove the *all-sufficiency* of ancient Art will of course be met with objections *every where*, and with displeasure and disdain pretty generally. The dust and the rust of antiquity have lain so long undisturbed, and have laid such fast hold of certain matters, that it will require a good many rubs to get them off, and to admit to the light of *fair* investigation what is under them; but it will be gratifying to some to find another labourer in the vineyard of taste clearing away the rubbish, and letting in a little of the sunshine of truth, where it has been so long obstructed. The greater part of the fallacies of ancient Art pointed out are sound, sensible, and thought-deserving objections, although, as a matter of course, the time is not yet come for their admission: some it would have been better to put hypothetically, and a few certainly are hypercritical. That, however, which will excite the greatest stir and dissension, although after this is passed many doubts will still remain unsettled, is the assumption that all the possible excellences of Art can be illustrated by the works of one single Artist! The boldness of the proposition put forth is not a little increased, when we reflect that *that* Artist is at the present hour an enigma to the public, and often, it must be confessed, a puzzle to the profession itself. The writer of this work has chosen the easier and more agreeable task of expatiating upon his excellences rather than defending his defects, of which he appears in no degree sensible. It must be acknowledged, that there is this much to be said in extenuation of any inordinate praise that may have been bestowed upon him, that if too much has been said upon cer-

tain merits which he is not entirely admitted to possess, too little has been advanced upon others, which all persons acquainted with Art will freely concede to him. He has certainly devoted himself to the nobler part of Art, has endowed it with a soul, and has overcome the very highest of the technical difficulties. One of these is of a magnitude of which none but Artists and real connoisseurs can form any judgment — it is one which is on a par, if not in advance of any thing ever achieved in the mechanism of Art. The best works of this Artist present to the eye a picture divested of the appearance of *paint*, and betraying nothing of the means usually observable in surfaces covered by the common implements of the Artist. There is nothing whatever of the *painted board* about them — that flat and impenetrable surface which one sees in the painted panel of the wainscot of a room, for instance; but instead, the eye enters and roves freely over the immensity of space: air, sea, and earth are all clearly suggested to the *mind* of the spectator, and his eye receives the same impression that it takes from the realities themselves. It is no matter whether the objects placed in and upon them are carefully drawn or not, or well or ill defined — there they are, and in their places too, presenting the same general characteristics they have in nature; and while the imitation in trifles is defective, that of important particulars is perfect — and the whole is effected by a means the spectator seeks in vain to discover. What may be called the *magic* of Art, that is to say, a *something* which goes beyond the common results of mere mechanism, has never been so successfully displayed as in the works of this Artist. The mechanism employed is clearly that best adapted to its end; no other can possibly produce the results that this is calculated to achieve: in its character it is genuine and perfect, but it cannot be said that in its exercise it has been carried to perfection. Perhaps he who has brought it thus far wants that abundant energy which belongs to the vigour of youth; at all events, it is probable that he will want that allowance of time which is necessary to perfect what has been so happily begun. It will, therefore, rest with some younger and future aspirant to take up, continue, and advance, what *he* has so nobly conceived and successfully practised. Thus it is that improvement is passed from hand to hand, and perfection is approached only by degrees. Thus it is in every advance towards perfection — what is left unaccomplished by one is advanced by another, until at last the most extended point permitted to human exertion is gained. Improvement is a kind of task given to mortals to perform, and appears to resemble a burden which one takes up and carries onwards as far as his strength will allow, until death compels him to put it down, when it waits a longer or a shorter time until a successor is found who is capable of giving it another lift, and of pushing it onwards. Whoever makes the attempt, however, must come prepared with the strength of him who has relinquished his labours, and be capable of

calling forth new energies at every step made necessary by its growing and increasing weight.

Whether the abundant stock of excellences attributed to the Artist who is really fortunate and enviable in having such a commentator and admirer of his merits be more or less than his due, is a difficult question to decide, and an ungrateful task to undertake. The master claim of the work before us rests upon its merits as a *mine of thought* made available to men whose lives, habits, and productions are distinguished — almost *branded* with the evidence of their never thinking at all — men for whose ambition being expert mechanics is sufficient honour! It is not so much a matter of importance whether one particular artist has achieved all that is, partially perhaps, attributed to him, it is infinitely more to be made acquainted with the resources of Art, as well as those of human powers cultivated by the necessary study and endeavour. In this sense the work before us, as regards the beautiful branch of Art it treats of, is invaluable. Let us turn to the account of the "Slave-ship," and regard it as a lesson simply; who, that has the dullest spark of poetry in his nature, does not see the "deep, wide, and illimitable sea" in connection with such a subject? and all its horrid associations is a circumstance at once highly poetic, forcible, appropriate, illustrative, and beautiful. That section of the work which commences under the head "Truth of Water" is matchless for the abundant suggestions made to the mind of the reader: whether the excellences and peculiarities named are found in the works of the painter or not, their prototype is found in nature, and is available to Art. It is evident that many of them are: that exemplification of the "swell" of the sea, as an artistic contrivance, is perfectly sublime. Indeed, there are so many beauties of this kind scattered through the work, that to do it any thing like justice, it must not only be read but studied.

The summing up of the merits of the artist, at page 400., is a perfect masterpiece of composition: whether, as has been said, he is really entitled to so much highly studied praise or not, few will deny him a claim to a very large portion of it, and all will envy his lot in being the object of such talented and discriminating comment, particularly those who reflect on the best that is likely to attend their highest merits and their happiest endeavours, through the meagre and cold approbation of general and ordinary criticism. The whole of this chapter, with the exception of the quotation at the end, which belongs peculiarly to the school of the *mystics*, may be pondered over with advantage by the most highly-qualified minds employed in the service of Art, and read and re-read again and again by the ordinary aspirant, the amateur, and the man of taste — those, in short, who would form an idea of the highest attribute of Art, with a feeling of satisfaction and a sense of benefit which ought to give inspiration and call forth gratitude. It is impossible, in the whole range of writing on the subject to find any thing more enlightened in perception, more refined in

feeling, more profoundly philosophic, more deeply learned in the mysteries of Art, more illustrative of its capabilities and powers, more explanatory of its means as connected with one great branch of its practice, than this short essay affords; nor is it possible to give the thoughts it contains a more defined and perfect form, or to clothe and grace them with all the resources of language — all that is comprehensive, forcible, appropriate, and complete. If the reader will not admit that such attributes as are cited belong to the Artist to whom they are given, he will, at least, see that appropriated to Art, they lift it to the highest elevation of excellence — to that class of excellence of which none but exalted minds can form a conception.

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As an instance of how little the minds of Artists and others are prepared for truths founded upon the *philosophy* of things whose phenomena are familiar to all, we may instance the appearance of a letter in the November number of the *Art-Union Journal*, denying a fact relative to reflections and shadows upon water, which has been put forth by the author of "Modern Painters," &c. To the assertion made that "the horizontal lines cast by clouds upon the sea are not shadows, but reflections, and that on clear water near the eye" there cannot be even the appearance "of a shadow," "except a delicate tint on the foam," which is given as a "universal and incontrovertible rule." It is objected to in this way: — "I wish to ask the author of this incontrovertible rule whether, when on the sea-side, he has never observed the *shadows* of clouds passing over the fields and from them to the sea, so that the same cloud at the same time darkens both earth and sea with its shadow? And also whether those shadows are not as *decided* on the *sea* as they are on a *grass field*?" Now in this objection one sees exactly the quantity and quality of the knowledge commonly possessed, which rests for ever upon mere *observation*, and has no solid foundation in principles based upon the immutable laws of nature. The author is asked if he has not "observed," &c., thus appealing to impressions never to be depended upon, instead of that knowledge which is demonstrable and certain. A cloud is seen to throw a shadow which darkens both earth and sea at the same time; and this is offered as a proof that *clear water* will receive shadows contrary to what is stated; nothing is attempted in the way of proof that this is *clear water*: it may be water so turbid or agitated and broken into foam, and made *opaque* by bubbles, as is elsewhere noticed, as to become almost as "susceptible of shadow as a chalk cliff or white paper." The author does not say that water rendered opaque by any means is not susceptible of shadows, but that *clear water* is not. Now the *rationale* of this is so simple that the principle of truth which it involves is evident and easy in the extreme. If any perfectly opaque substance — such as a lump of chalk — be taken and

placed by the side of a semitransparent one—a lump of white wax, for instance—and a shadow be projected from the same body at the same distance upon both, this shadow will be of two very distinct qualities—on the chalk it will be strong and well defined—on the wax it will be weak and transparent, particularly at its edges, where the light is seen to enter. Now by a parity of reasoning it will be seen that if you remove the wax and put in its stead some substance still more transparent, you will have *less* shadow; and if you continue to make the experiment with substances still more transparent, until you come to pure glass or clear water, you will have *no shadow at all*. Here is the principle clearly defined, and, as the graduate has asserted, “incontrovertible.” Whether water, or glass, or any other substance is ever so perfectly clear as to refuse to receive *any shadow at all*, it is not necessary to prove for the principle’s sake; perhaps the difference of *density* merely *may be* a cause of some very slight degree of shadow, but practically the fact and the principle upon which it rests are clear and decided. Principles are the results of fixed laws—do not wait the applied proof to establish their truth—if they did, there is no problem of Euclid which would be exempt from the necessity of such proof.

If a person would prove to me that two parallel lines or two *converging* lines will never meet, I may insist upon the proof, if I like, and demand, after he has drawn his problem upon, and to the limits of, a sheet of paper, that he should take me to Liverpool by the *railroad*, and when I get there I may insist still on his going on, under the plea that the proof he offers is not complete, because I will have the experiment carried farther. The graduate might have gone farther, and said that clear water was insusceptible of light as well as shadow, which would have been more puzzling. Light must have something to shine upon, and shadow must have something to fall upon. They both manifest themselves upon solid substances—such as the end of a house, the smoke that issues from the chimney, or the fog that fills the atmosphere; but they do not show themselves upon clear *air*, nor upon clear water! When the writer of the article in the *Art-Union*, therefore, *asserts* that the shadows he saw were as *decided* on the sea as they are on a *grass field*, he lets us clearly into the light of his mental and bodily perceptions together; and all the reply necessary is, that unless he can prove the sea to have been as *opaque* as the earth, he must be mistaken; and if he should wonder how this could be, he may be told that it is not at all surprising, having no sound principles to guide him.

A very beautiful illustration of the great quantity of light admitted or contained, as it were, in water, is to be found in what is called the *blue grotto* at the island of *Capri*, near Naples, which has been seen by most travellers. This grotto is a natural cavern of great extent. It is formed by an arch, or dome rather, which is an integral part of the rock. It spans over from its attachment on the left to perhaps a

hundred yards to the right, much in the way that a person may hold his left hand, putting his fingers together, and making a dome of the hollow of the palm. Closing his thumb upon the second joint of his fore-finger, he will leave a small aperture, which resembles the little hole at which you enter, hardly large enough for a small boat. This is the only place at which light is admitted directly, and this is so small, that when you are within, and look towards it, it looks only like a star or a blue light burning. The only illumination of the cave, which goes to its full limits, is by light, which comes *up through the water*. If you fancy your hollowed hand to represent the roof of this cave, and the ends of your fingers dipped to the second joint in water which surrounds your hand, leaving the hollow unoccupied, and that the sky gives light which enters under the ends of them, you will have a good notion of the form of this natural curiosity. There is a space between the bottom of the sea and that part of the rock which dips down into it, and which is represented by the ends of your fingers, of what extent I don't know, but large enough to admit a sufficiency of light, which passes thence by means of the water, and illuminates the cavern with a blue light of the most magical character. The little boat you are in does not appear to float upon a surface, but to be suspended in air: all above you is dark and obscure, and below it appears clear and bright; and if you can discern nothing under you, it is that you appear to be lifted too high. Your hands, if you look at them, are dark and colourless; and the face of the boatman, which you can distinguish plainly enough, is dark, lurid, and lighted up from *below*. The oars, as they dip into the water, do not appear to break the surface, but to strike against something which shivers, breaks, and crumbles into particles. Of course there is no *glittering* upon the drops, because there is no light brighter than the medium itself, nor any sparkling any where. When water is thrown up by the hands into dark recesses, it looks like sub-ignited brimstone, and falls on the surface in dark specks like a solid substance. There is commonly a little boy who attends, and who strips and dives for bits of coral, which he brings up from the bottom. His plunge into the blue medium is the most curious and startling thing imaginable. His form is distinctly seen, and resembles a silver image struggling and floating in air, and losing itself in distance. The action of the figure is distinctly seen; but you cannot persuade yourself that it is that of a swimmer, from the unusual character of the medium. All this is the result of *shadow* falling upon objects that will receive it, and upon that which will not, namely, the water. If shadow could be thrown upon water, its surface would, as a matter of necessity, have been dark, and thus the whole would have become one undistinguishable mass of obscurity — just such as an artist would paint it who was impressed with a notion that water was shadowed in a way similar to the objects of earth!

## A LETTER

FROM AN UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT.

MR. EDITOR,

If it be really practicable to simplify and make accessible to common intelligence and good sense "all the deepest mysteries of Art," pray, Sir, at once, or as soon as possible, remove a stumbling-block which is a real perplexity and impediment of both the classes of students, which you have so appropriately distinguished as "those who are labouring to *know*, and those who are learning to *do*."

Assist our inexperience to decide which of two sets of diametrically opposite opinions on certain works of Art are founded on true taste and an artist-like knowledge of nature.

You must know that I have for some time been a resident in the family of an ardent lover of the Arts, possessing a collection of modern pictures which has the reputation of consisting, almost without exception, of the best specimens of the best masters.

I need scarcely say that I have, from the first, sedulously endeavoured to avail myself of such an excellent opportunity of increasing my stock of artistic knowledge, and of improving my taste. I have been more particularly desirous of that kind of information which I naturally expected to derive from hearing the opinions and criticisms of artists and experienced amateurs, who form a considerable portion of our circle of acquaintance.

The greater part of our collection is by various hands, but a considerable number are the production of a single artist—my friend's especial favourite.

As to the miscellaneous portion of the collection there exists great uniformity of opinion, with an almost unanimous admission, that the pictures are choice specimens of their respective authors, and I trust I have gathered much useful information from the technical and tasteful comments of our professional and connoisseur friends.

With regard, however, to the productions of my friend's favourite, the case is very different; indeed, so contradictory are the opinions and judgments to which these works give rise, that, at times, I am almost tempted to suspect that there are no real principles of criticism in the Fine Arts.

With a very numerous class of critics they are the dreamy creations of a distempered vision and a disordered mind; with another class, they are the legitimate deductions of a mighty intellect, from a long course of scientific practice, founded on an accurate and intimate investigation of nature.



On both sides of the question are ranged individuals who appear to have an ardent love of art, men of talent and education.

On referring to my own experience of the impressions these works make on my mind, I find that my estimate of them is considerably higher than when I first became acquainted with them, although I am almost afraid to confess so much, it having been more than once insinuated that I have been "talked into" a fancied love of that which my natural perceptions and unbiassed judgment would otherwise have justly condemned. Nay, I am even suspected of being afflicted with a species of monomania; for the other day, on my pointing out one of the most recent of these pictures to an old gentleman, a friend of the family and an eminent amateur and collector, as being my greatest favourite on account of its truth and beauty, he exclaimed, "Truth! beauty! I must have done with you, for I find by experience that there is no hope of any one once infected with Turner-mania!" Then again we have the professed or professional critics: they are almost unanimous in the unmeasured expression of contemptuous and unmitigated condemnation of Mr. Turner's pictures in the present exhibition. On my friend's return from his visit to the annual exhibitions in London a few days ago, he began to unload his pictorial news-budget, by informing us that Mr. Turner had produced at least two pictures so replete with excellence, that whatever faults they might have could be but as dust in the balance. On enquiry I found that these two gems were entitled, *The Wallhalla*, and *The Dogana and Madonna della Salute*. I immediately took up the last number of the "Art Union Journal," and read aloud, "No. 14. 'The Opening of the Wallhalla;' J. M. W. Turner, R. A. Criticism would be wasted on what appears to be executed without *end*, *aim*, or *principle*. The picture is a whirlpool or whirlwind of colours, neither referring to fact, nor appealing to the imagination; yet there are others in the exhibition more objectionable still."

"Well," said my friend, "and what of the Dogana?" "This," says the critic, "is the most intelligible of the pictures painted by this artist; yet here there are extravagancies which reduce the work infinitely below the average of similar works exhibited in past years." My friend merely observed that he could assure me that, of the many specimens of Turner with which we were surrounded, he possessed not one which would bear comparison with the pictures in question, as regards an intensely true representation of nature, carried out in accordance with the highest principles of art, and that he hoped he had obtained from them much available information, both as to sound principle and scientific practice. On my asking for his opinion as to the comparative merits of Turner's early and recent works, he said, I must refer you to his '*Crossing the Brook*,' and '*Temple of Jupiter*,' with both of which I believe you are acquainted. They are considered fair specimens of the class of pictures on which it is said the future reputation of Turner must depend. Admitting them to possess all

those qualities which their admirers claim for them, I can see but little in them which has not been done tolerably well by others: they merely prove that Turner was at least equal to Claude in Claude's own way. It is not by such pictures as these," continued my friend, "that Turner's name will be handed down to future ages as one of those (and few they are) who have really extended the boundaries of the realm of art. It is by that class of pictures in which are to be found the '*Loretto Necklace*,' the '*Medea*,' the '*Téméraire*,' the '*Hero and Leander*,' and, lastly, the much-abused '*Wallhalla*,' and the '*Dogana and Madonna della Salute*,' that he has proved himself a truly great and original artist, for in them we have the beauty and poetry of landscape exhibited through the medium of a scientific and intensely-truthful imitation of nature, of which there are comparatively but faint and feeble indications in his so much more lauded early works."

Now, Mr. Editor, I ask you, if possible, to point out and explain the causes of perplexing discordance of opinion amongst those to whom we poor amateurs naturally look for information and assistance. Here is an artist whose works (whatever may be their merits) have at all events excited universal attention from artists, connoisseurs, critics, and amateurs. If mere numbers are to decide the question, his works merit only such notice as that of the Art Union critique, for they are certainly "caviaro" to the multitude. On the other hand, I am given to understand that many of the best and most celebrated artists and poets are Mr. Turner's ardent admirers; and this I am the more inclined to believe, because it is borne out by some instances within my own experience, for I remember that when Mr. Edwin Landseer visited my friend's collection, he devoted himself almost exclusively to the Turners, and when at last his attention was called to a fine specimen of Bonington, he said, "Yes, it is a fine picture, but your Turners have spoiled me for every thing else!"

Sir Augustus Calcott also made the most obvious distinction in his preference and admiration of the works of Turner, speaking of them as instances of a beautiful and profoundly truthful representation of nature. I may in like manner mention the venerated name of the poet Rogers; but I fear you will look upon me rather as a partisan than as a genuine enquirer after truth. When opinions are so diametrically opposed to each other as they are in this case, there must be error on one side or the other. May not these contradictions be in a great measure the result of extreme ignorance of art in the great mass of those persons who take upon themselves the office of critics and reviewers? Can any one be a judge of art whose judgment is not founded on an accurate knowledge of nature? It is scarcely possible that a mere knowledge of pictures, however extensive, can qualify a man for the arduous and responsible duties of public criticism of art? I assure you, it is scarcely a week since I was called upon to assist in a discussion between two gentlemen — one of them an eminent con-

noisseur and collector, and the other an influential critic—as to the colour of a hill, then in shadow about half a mile off—one of them calling it *brown*, and the other *blue*: it was, however, by a very simple expedient, proved to be a decided *purple*, by a mere novice in art, but an assiduous and persevering student of nature; and yet such judges as these take upon themselves authoritatively to tell the public what is or what is not natural and true in art. Nay, I could relate instances within my own knowledge in which the rash and presumptuous dicta of mere miscalled critics, who know absolutely nothing either of nature or art, have done irreparable injury to the reputation and prospects of young artists, who require nothing but fair play and a correct estimate of their works, to place them in due time amongst the heads of their profession. To come, however, to the question, (and I know not how to put it better than by referring to those particular pictures now before the public,) are we to appreciate such a work as the *Wallhalla* according to the estimate of an eminent landscape painter, by whom I am assured it is, to use his very words, “*the right thing and the true thing*;” or is it really what it “*appears*” to the “*Art Union*” editor, a thing on which criticism would be wasted—executed *without end, aim, or principle*?

Trusting to your kind consideration of the requirements of us your willing pupils in both classes under such perplexing circumstances,

I remain, Sir,

Truly yours,

MATILDA Y—.

N. B. The Editor promises a candid reply to this letter in the Number of next month.

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THE

# ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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## BEAUTY.

“ C'est une vérité universellement reconnue aujourd'hui; la cause la plus générale et la plus dangereuse de nos erreurs, de nos mauvais raisonnements, est dans l'abus continuel que nous faisons des mots.”— *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française.*

HAVING proceeded thus far in the examination of the TERM Beauty, we now come to name, and hereafter to investigate and explain, the nature of the THING. What *is* the Beautiful, and in *what* does the Beauty of the creation at large consist? To reply, in one word — VARIETY.

Now, it is no more to be expected that the inquirer should understand from this one word *all* that the system of which it is merely the name implies and comprehends, than that the heat and brightness of the sun should be made at once manifest by the ignition of a lucifer match. The fire and illumination of both *may be* the same; but the one is utterly insignificant as a test of the other.

Every inquirer will attach the general signification and idea to the term VARIETY, and to this probably add some peculiar meaning of his own; and no one will limit or extend its signification to the standard required, unless he is previously directed, and put in possession of the means.

As the whole system upon which this hypothesis of Beauty is founded may be regarded but as one extended and elaborate definition of the thing, any attempt to shorten or compress it into a proposition comprehensive of the whole must be futile. All therefore that can be done, is to furnish the inquirer with such an explanation as will enable him to travel to a certain extent, when other provision will be made for him, and from thence he may proceed to the end.

If we turn our observation to the subject, we shall see that human instruments are but very inadequate to human powers and to human ends; and that language itself, although of the first importance, will neither keep pace with thought, nor serve entirely its purposes. It will consequently follow that as new thoughts arise, and new truths call for investigation, new means will be demanded to meet the

casualties to which they give rise; and it will often be found more convenient to modify the old, than to create new for the occasion, which startle by their novelty alone. The word *Variety*, therefore, is not adopted because it is fully equal to its object, but because custom has qualified it to a certain extent, and because a better cannot be found.

It is assumed as a proposition that the beauty of the creation at large consists in variety; and from this two inevitable deductions follow,—namely, that those objects possessed of the largest quantity of variety are the most beautiful, and that those possessed of the smallest quantity are the least beautiful.

The hypothesis offered rests upon this foundation; and whatever arguments, facts, and deductions may arise from the further elaboration of the subject, they are to be regarded but as the auxiliaries of this proposition, with its consequent corollary.

Having set aside those schemes by which Beauty is made merely a moral essence, a sentiment of the mind, an association, a concourse of recollections and sympathies, and not a physical existence, it is scarcely necessary to say this theory assumes that Beauty is a real and material property of objects.

First, then, let us consider what is the ordinary acceptation of the term *Variety*. I don't know what may be its precise definition according to the best lexicographers; nor is it of importance, since its best authority is to be found in that which is the strength of all languages,—its *conventional use*. To this I shall confine myself.

*Variety*, in its most comprehensive sense, essential character, and ordinary acceptation, is *change*: — to *vary*, is to change the conditions of being in some way or other.

A change in the objects of an organ or a sense necessarily produces a change in the sensation, or in the state of perception of such sense.

It behoves us to examine for a moment the nature or conditions of a change in objects. To use the plainest language, we may ask how can they change? And a conviction will be instantly felt that they must possess the properties capable of change, and which properties, agreeable to this system, must be physical and real; so that we may say objects must possess the *materials* to be capable of change. A single unit, for instance, may be considered as incompetent of change; while two will admit of one change, three of more than two, four of more than three, and so on; and this in every particular in which change can be made. And now comes the inquiry, in what particulars can change be made, or variety effected? The reply is, in the three great elements or essential conditions of being — Form, Colour, and Texture.

It is not intended at this moment to enter upon an inquiry of what these several elements are made up; it is enough to state that these are the proper objects, or the *materials*, as we ought to call them, of variety or change.

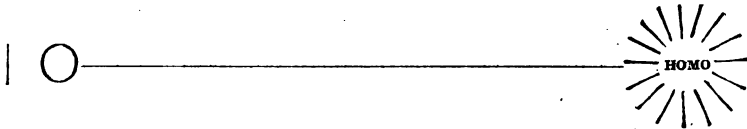
Another important consideration, which we shall come to hereafter, will be to investigate and explain the mode employed in the operation of varying or changing, and the principles upon which such operation is conducted.

Variety, according to the principle of this hypothesis, consists in creating that diversity in and among the parts and particulars of things in the three great properties of form, colour, and texture, which shall make up a *composition* that will admit of no farther diversity, variety, or change.

It is assumed that the highest capability of change exists in the human creature, less in every other object of the creation, and least in the lowest order of being.

The instant you can produce change in an object, you begin to create Beauty; when you have carried change as far as it will go, you have created the highest example of Beauty.

Simple truths often escape us the easiest; so that, perhaps, it has not struck everybody that all the wonderful variety in the whole creation, as regards *form*, is the result of a combination of the two simple elements of form,—namely, the\* straight line and the circle, | ○. These will admit of no change. Now, if these *simple elements* of form be considered as the commencement of a chain of physical existence, and occupying the lowest position, while the human creature is placed at the other end of this chain, and made to take the highest, we shall have an emblem or epitome of this hypothesis appearing to the eye; thus:—



Instead of giving a pictured representation of the human creature, the inquirer is requested to fill the space containing the word *Homo* with the most perfect sample of human beauty he can find or fancy. He will then have the most complete specimen of the combination of the elements of form on the one hand, and the elements themselves, simple and uncombined, *incapable of variety*, on the other; while the

\* Whoever will look into Fry's *Pantographia*, a collection of all the alphabets,—characters which have ever been in use from the earliest times,—will find that the *Alpha* and *Omega* of some of the ancient Greek alphabets assimilate very closely to these simple elements of form; indeed, that they are but very slight modifications of them: so that the scriptural application of the Alpha and Omega, “the first and the last,” to the Deity in his creative capacity, is very singular, appropriate, and beautiful. The suggestion thus made to the mind gains additional force by reflecting upon the mode in which these emblems have been used. We see that they have at all times been employed to designate dominion, authority, and rule; they are clearly the *sceptre* and *globe* we see placed in the hands of the rulers of the earth, and which have continued to the present time. If their meaning be enigmatical, it becomes still more so, when it is considered that they were used long and long before it was suspected that the *earth* was spherical; so that the *globe* cannot with any propriety be taken as the emblem of that body.

whole space between, and which may be supposed representing the inferior objects of the creation, will be occupied by things in every kind and degree of combination, from the lowest up to the highest.

The same idea conveyed by the diagram may be given in words, and will appear thus :—

*Monotony*—————*Variety*.

Or thus :

*Shapelessness*—————*Form*.

By this the inquirer will see more clearly what sense and extent of meaning this term *Variety* is intended to assume. It is a word which is the direct antithesis of *monotony* which is *wanted*. Call it amplitude, fulness of parts, a state of being opposed to that of paucity or fewness of parts: the term employed is of very little importance, so that we obtain a just conception of the thing; and which, upon examination, is perhaps better indicated by the term *variety* than any other.

The Latin language affords a term to which some curious considerations are attached, and will be noticed hereafter. *FORMA* is the most complete that can be found, but it has no direct and negative antagonist substantive; but the adjectives expressive of the Beautiful, and its opposite, convey a meaning more pure and appropriate than are to be found in our own language. These terms would stand thus :—

*Informis*—————*Formosis*.

Our expressions *ugliness* or *ugly* tend to convey an idea of some *positive* quality in things whereas all that is desirable to express is; that condition which results simply from the *absence* of beauty, or deficiency of what may be called the beautifying principle,—*Variety*. Objects may be rendered ugly, disgusting, hideous, horrible, terrible, and so on; but this is effected by the intervention of the mind, and is associative, and not positive or physical,—a distinction which belongs properly to the secondary causes of Beauty, and which will be considered hereafter.

The inquirer will perceive that we are here skimming the surface of the system before us. This is done with a view of bringing some important particular at once into notice, the deepening and elaboration of which will be deferred; and, in the view taken of the matter, this mode of proceeding will very much facilitate the treatment and comprehension of a very difficult subject. The inquirer is therefore requested to return to the diagram, which is offered as an epitome of this hypothesis, and where he will find the simple elements of form at the inferior end of the chain of creation, and man, the most perfect specimen of their combination, at the other—the superior, the highest, the most exalted. He has been asked to put into the place occupied by the word *Homo* the most complete example of the genus he can find or fancy. Now, upon these two little terms, *find* and *fancy*, hinge one of the most important points of the subject under examination, and without some conception of which previously obtained we shall find ourselves effectually barred from proceeding.

In the search after this object—in the attempt to *find* what is most beautiful, some natural suggestions will be made to the mind. It will be readily seen that no single example comprises the beauties which lie scattered among the many; and it will also become manifest that some study, some exercise of intelligence in the *choice* of what is taken, and some improvement of the sense employed in selecting, are necessary, in order to distinguish and to compare in many specimens the exact relation which they bear to each other, the particulars in which one is superior to the other, and the exact extent to which they go,—where they begin to lose, and where they cease to be any further beautiful and perfect. It will be seen that one individual has a head of great beauty and perfection; but that it is placed, perhaps, upon a body too short or too long,—upon shoulders too broad or too narrow, too high or too low. *Common* observation will show that the *relation of parts* in another individual is more agreeable; but that, as a whole, it is still defective, wanting the beauty seen in the head of the first. Others, again, will exhibit more perfection than either of these in the extremities,—in the hands and feet, for instance; so that every single specimen taken has some defect, and no one found is equal to what you require. You are now thrown upon the only alternative left you—to *fancy* the perfect object you cannot *find*. To a certain extent there is no difficulty in this; and to a certain extent, also, there is no difficulty in conveying the impression you feel and the idea you entertain to another. Language, with its grand stock of resources, is equal to this; and we will suppose that you have a highly cultivated mind, improved powers of perception, and a happy facility of thought and expression. We will suppose that you wish to convey the idea of this perfect thing you contemplate, and see lie scattered in a thousand directions, to another. You will perhaps name or number the several particulars of which this beautiful idea is made up. You will describe these beauties, separately and collectively, with all the force and effect of the poet; and having done this—you will have done all you possibly can do to conceive and to render a just notion of the perfect object required, and which is to be regarded as the most exalted example of divine and perfect composition.

You can do no more: but now there comes one of those aspirants and operators who can,—who is endowed by nature equally with yourself, and who has cultivated means you have neglected altogether. He sees, as you do, that no one specimen of the thing required is perfect; he does as you do,—selects, arranges, and combines; he gives names to particulars, and describes in words the effect of every *supposed* combination. But, in addition to this, and to all that can be effected by ordinary means, he adds a new and peculiar power, infinitely more capable of meeting the demands of the occasion, and of carrying out the most enlightened intentions: he commands the means by which the suggestions and the work of the fancy can be embodied. *Words* are utterly incapable,—*forms* alone are competent; and these he has studied and mastered. His mind has learnt them,



his eye is familiar with them, and his hand is obedient to the will which guides in the treatment of them; in which he has at his command the mighty and consummate agency of ART, with all that belongs to it in its *imitative* as well as its *creative* capacity. What you attempt to describe in feeble words, the mere signs of real and tangible things, he renders by a representation little short of the realities themselves; and while you address a *sense* improper, and incompetent to the end required, he speaks to the sense nature has created as the proper means of communicating with the mind to which it is allied.

By the peculiar powers of his art he is put in humble rivalry with nature herself. He cannot create or combine living essences or existences; but he is enabled to create images which represent to the eye and suggest to the mind the living characteristics, and, as a whole, are more perfect than their great prototypes. Just in proportion as his means are more ample, comprehensive, and complete than the ordinary, so is the influence and effect of the thing he achieves; and while the one leaves indefinite and ill explained what is undertaken, the other corrects and perfectionates what nature herself has left defective and incomplete.

The various beauties which lie scattered and distinct in many, he combines in one specimen, and in a manner in which perhaps no combination of them can be found in nature. He adds to what is deficient, and retrenches what is redundant; thus balancing with the nicest adjustment quantities, parts, and particulars, so that the object he produces combines all that lies open to common observation. But this is not all; he does much more than this. To the devotedness of a life which knows but one passion, one long and relentless yearning after the object of its desires, he adds his own experience, and to his own that of men similarly devoted and inspired with himself. What they have spent long lives and exhaustless energies in acquiring, and which they have only relinquished with life, he takes up and carries forwards by additional powers self-created, by which he has qualified himself to become their successor. And what are the means he has employed? He has made his mind familiar with every distinction that nature presents; he has computed very contrast, and weighed every assimilation; he has schooled his perceptions to the closest observation, and his reflections to the nicest deductions; he has cultivated his eye to a perfection which sets at nought the most complicated and perfect instruments; and has taught his hand to be obedient to his will; the power he wields is chastened by experience, and guided by the light of that intelligence which has become brighter and brighter at every step of his career. In short, he has learnt to *know* and to *do*; and what he has produced could only be the production of such means as he has employed.

Now let us see what it is he has produced. What have we here? The most complete specimen in nature is defective, even to common observation; but here is one which, on account of its great superiority, may be called perfect. This is the object fit to fill the place we

have provided for it; this we may regard as an extension or advance of the principle found every where in nature, and which is assumed as the cause of Beauty; this is a perfect specimen of the highest order of composition,—one possessing, above the ordinary, more *form*, more variety, more beauty. A human creature of this high order is not to be found; therefore a substitute has been provided, embodying the idea of perfection. 'It is a STATUE! Say the Apollo Belvedere, if you please; but it is a creation of Art. It is the sublime problem upon which so much has been written and said, and so little understood; it is the BEAU IDEAL.

We need not question how we became possessed, or to whom we are indebted for the possession of it; and in spite of every notion and theory which have made over this beautiful creation to the poetic dreamers of antiquity, it is clearly the creation of the artists.

Now, as many lives of labour, close investigation, reflection, and practical experiments, led to the production of this beautiful creation, it followed, as a matter of necessity, that that which required so much study and pains to produce should demand some attention to understand and appreciate. It has been said that an artist *learns* to see nature as he represents it,—a fact which implies the necessity of some learning on the part of those who would fully understand and feel the merits of what he produces. This example of the *beau ideal*, or the scattered beauties of nature combined in one specimen, could not be understood by those whose perceptions, having never been cultivated, were left in the ordinary condition. But there was a method at hand of obtaining the knowledge required; and this was to pursue the study upon the principles adopted in the creation of the thing, or in the mode of the artists. Indeed, common sense points out there can be no other. Those, therefore, who desired to comprehend and feel the full effect of this happy and wonderful production of art, took the course indicated; and learning to see, think, and feel, in the manner of the artists, were the first to understand what they had achieved. The comprehension of the beau ideal, a pure creation of art, was the first exercise of the faculty of Taste,—was that in which its *name* originated, and is that from which its votaries have derived the distinction they enjoy as *men of taste*.

The inquirer will here perceive that we have passed *with ease* some of the greatest difficulties by which the subject is beset. Whether we have overcome them or not, is a matter which will be made more apparent, perhaps proved, by the further elaboration of the subject. As far as we have proceeded, it is hoped that what has been *asserted* is clear to the mind of the inquirer, whether he acquiesce in it or not. At present the matter stands thus:—

First, That the TERM Beautiful, in its general use, is but *figurative*; and of course may be applied, as it is, in every possible way and to every possible object.

Second, The thing BEAUTY is *said* to consist entirely in VARIETY.

Third, That the beau ideal is a pure creation of Art.

Fourth, That the appreciation of the beau ideal is TASTE.

It will be the object of the next part of this Essay to investigate the use and abuse of the *term* Taste; and to establish, what is assumed as a proposition,—that in its purest, most comprehensive, and ordinary use,

Taste is the appreciation of excellence.

To this will be added a full explanation of the hypothesis built on Variety as the source of Beauty.

I should wish the inquirer, before the next Part appears, to exercise his thoughts on the subject of FORM, considered as a source of Beauty; being convinced that unless some theory previously adopted stands in the way, he will find he has got the clew—found the entrance into a region of speculation, which will give him ample space, and afford him some new and peculiar views of the subject. In that dark and unhappy state of want of information in Art to which it has been our painful duty so often to advert, it is by no means likely that that upon which Art is built—the external character and appearances of things—should ever have been thought of, much less examined and closely studied, as the source of Beauty. Not a single step in approach of the subject of our inquiry can ever have been taken in that direction;—whatever illustration Art may be capable of affording has unquestionably been neglected. Let the inquirer turn his thoughts to FORM, or, in more ordinary language, the *shapes of things generally*. The most careless observer must perceive that some things have more variety of shape than others; and if he likes to consider this greater variety of shape as fully expressed by the word Form, he will have caught the idea, and obtained a glimpse of the principle, upon which this hypothesis rests. Let him admit that Beauty depends on some physical qualities of objects, and possibly that it may consist in the variety of shape, or in *form*. He may assist the reasoning process by going at once to the mere elements of form—the circle and the straight line: here he will see an example of *shapes* (falsely so to call them) which will admit of no modification whatever, no beautifying or making more ugly; but there are evidently other objects or shapes which will admit of both. Let him keep steadily in mind that, from *Chaos to Creation*, FORM is the grand pervading principle by which the character of things is given. I avoid for the present to speak of colour and texture, in order to preserve the utmost possible simplicity; but if you take any object, and deprive it of its shape, you deprive it of something which made it pleasing, or interesting, or pretty, or, as far as it went, beautiful. By thus undoing or inverting, as it were, the principle in which Beauty is said to consist, you deprive objects of their character, and reduce them to a condition in which you cannot apply any of these epithets, but must call them ugly or shapeless; so that the idea of want of beauty will inevitably attach to things wanting variety in their shapes. In viewing the inquiry in this way, it comes

naturally to be asked, may not this principle be Beauty,—this principle, which pervades all nature,—that runs through the whole creation,—that is found in every degree and relation, from the lowest up to the highest example of objects? I can readily see where difficulties will arise in any attempt made to pursue the principle we speak of through a connected chain of objects, either upwards to the highest, or downwards to the lowest. A mind unaccustomed to contemplate objects in their several varieties of form, will naturally feel embarrassed and dissatisfied; but the moment one object is discovered to have more variety of shape or form than another, the first step is gained,—the principle is recognized; and the conclusion, although not arrived at through means which are fully satisfactory, is nevertheless self-evident. If some objects have but little shape, others have more, others again still more, and some must have the most it is possible they should possess,—may not this variety in their shapes be the cause of Beauty, and in the most highly varied examples Beauty itself? It is clear, agreeable to what has been said, that the opposite of this is the cause and consequence of ugliness!

## AN ESSAY ON SCULPTURE.

By COUNT HAWKS LE GRICE — *Rome.*

“*Artibus ingenuis quæsitæ est gloria multis.*”

WITH regard to the origin of sculptural design various opinions have been advocated, as well by the ancients as the moderns; but on this, as on every subject that regards man's early history, the most authentic as well as the earliest information is to be found in the Inspired Volume. In Exodus we read of the images of Laban and the golden calf; the latter made by Aaron and the Israelites, and worshipped during the absence of Moses on Sinai. We also read that the Almighty commanded statues of cherubim to be made to extend their wings over the ark of the covenant, and cherubim to be made to adorn the veil of the tabernacle. The strong tendency of the Israelites to idolatry accounts for the strict injunctions which forbade them to worship any image; whilst the erection of statues in the temple proves, as Flaxman justly observes, that the command was not against the images, but against the abuse of them for idolatrous purposes.

“It is,” adds he, “a most gratifying reflection to the practitioner of the sister arts, that the Almighty condescended to employ them as the handmaids of religion; and that he particularly inspired Aholiab and Bezaleel to produce the most admirable and lively decorations of angelic forms for his tabernacle.”\*

The father of profane history records that the Egyptians erected the first altars and temples to the gods, and carved the figures of animals on stone†; and their remaining works demonstrate the veracity of the historian. Of these early labours some are hewn from the living rock, such as the celebrated Sphinx near the pyramids of Ghizeh, which still adheres to

\* Lectures on Sculpture, No. 2.

† Herodot. Euterpe.

the natural bed; and others were built of square blocks and cut into form, as is the case with some of the figures in the Memnonium. The sitting statues of Memnon, the mother and son of Osmandue, at Thebes, are each fifty-eight feet high, — an unmeaning waste of time and toil. Some of the colossal figures of men are found entirely isolated; and the modern discovery of deciphering hieroglyphics has enabled us to ascertain that they had been, in some instances at least, objects of worship. The entire class of these statues presents the same character,—the head looking straight forward; the arms either hanging down straight on each side, or, if one is raised, it forms a right angle across the body. They are thus totally deficient in grace and motion, and betray an entire disregard for anatomical proportions, the head being much too large for the body, and the hands and feet at variance with both. Their simplicity and occasional beauty of form are not, however, without merit. Their bas-reliefs are still more deficient, being totally without perspective, or motion, or anatomical form. Such are the productions of the chisel in the early history of Egyptian art, which embraces a period of nearly twenty centuries previous to the era of Alexander.

After the Ptolomies, the successors of Alexander the Great ruled Egypt; and Egyptian sculpture, although still essentially Egyptian, was enlivened by Grecian taste, and approximated somewhat to the standard of Grecian beauty in proportions, attitude, character, and drapery. This second epoch is hence denominated the period of Mixed Art, to designate the modifications of the ancient forms induced by the Greeks.

The Roman dominion also exercised its influence on the arts of Egypt; and the reign of Adrian is marked as the third epoch of Egyptian sculpture. It gave to the ancient forms increased elegance, whilst it still preserved their peculiar character as Egyptian; and of this we have numerous illustrations in the statues made by order of that emperor to decorate the canopus of his villa near Tivoli, many of which are now preserved in the Egyptian museum of the Vatican.

“The history of Greek sculpture,” says a modern writer, “may be divided generally into four principal periods, each distinguished by striking peculiarities of style or treatment. The first embraces all that uncertain age, of which our only knowledge is in the traditions handed down by ancient writers, to the period of the Archaic monuments of the Æginetan style or school, that is, to 600 or 550 B.C.; and this may be termed the Archaic period. The second period is the Phidian, and will reach from the Æginetan down to the sublime style of sculpture, which was brought to perfection by Phidias and his contemporaries about 450 to 400 B.C. The third period is distinguished by the introduction of a richer and softer style of execution effected by Praxiteles, and varied in some respects by Lysippus, and may be brought as low down as 250 to 200 B.C. The fourth and last is the period of the decline of sculpture in Greece, under bad imitators and worse innovators, when grandeur was lost sight of in detail, when manner took the place of style, and simplicity and general grace were superseded by individuality and littleness. We now hasten briefly to notice these periods.

With regard to the Archaic period, Sicyon, the little territory of which extended but a few miles along the south-eastern extremity of the Corinthian Gulf, became celebrated for the commerce, wealth, and intelligence of its people, — elements which soon laid the foundation of the Sicyonian Academy, and entitled that ancient city to be called the “Mother of the

Fine Arts." The origin of the Sicyonian school is generally ascribed to Dibutades, who from an humble potter became accidentally the inventor of modelling. The story of his daughter having traced the outline of her lover's profile from the shadow cast on the wall by a lamp, and of the outline being afterwards filled in with clay by her father, and sent with his pottery to be baked, is recorded by Pliny, who informs us that even to his time the medallion was preserved as a most interesting relic of art.\* To this period also belongs the school of the little island of Ægina, nearly opposite Athens; at the head of which stands Smilis, famous for his statues of Juno, especially one at Samos, called by Pliny "the most ancient image" of that goddess. But the most celebrated sculptor of this period was Dedalus, the statements regarding whose adventures and discoveries in sculpture are too remote, and partake so much of the fabulous that they scarcely belong to the historic era. He is said to have rendered himself famous at the court of Minos, before settling in Attica; and his mechanical as well as sculptural skill is said to have recommended him to Theseus, the conqueror of the Minotaur, by whom he was invited to accompany him to Athens, and lay the foundation of the Athenian school of sculpture. Some of his works are described by Pausanias as existing in his time; and are said by him to have possessed something of divine expression. His performances were chiefly of wood, nine of which remained in the second century. The sculpture in alto-rilievo over the gates of Mycenæ, representing two lions rampant against a sort of pillar or column, is the most ancient specimen of Grecian art extant. It is still in the situation in which it was originally placed, forming, as it does, part of the wall; and is justly regarded by all travellers to Mycenæ, as well as by every admirer of the arts, as an object of particular interest.

The most ancient statue in brass is one of Jupiter by Learchus, a sculptor of Rhegium, mentioned by Pausanias; and this, as well as some coins that still remain, have led to the inference that the state of the arts in Magna Græcia was more flourishing in the eighth century before Christ than in the mother country.

The earliest works in brass appear to have been executed in hammer-work; and such was the statue of Jupiter just mentioned, as we know from Pausanias, who informs us that it was formed of pieces fastened together by pins.

The first cast brass statues were by Telecles, Rhæcus, and Theodorus; and Pliny says, that although the Corinthians claimed for Dibutades the honour of having invented the plastic art, tradition ascribed the invention to the above-mentioned sculptors.† Pliny says that they lived about seven centuries before our era. At what time statues were first cast in brass in moulds taken from models is uncertain; but Rhæcus and Theodorus, both Samians, if not the inventors, were certainly the most distinguished artists in this department during the Archaic period.

To this period also seem to belong the very interesting remains of sculpture discovered amongst the ruins of a temple in the island of Ægina, which are now in the collection of the King of Bavaria at Munich, but which once decorated the pediment of the temple. Of the subject to which they relate no satisfactory exposition has yet been given. The conspicuous place occupied by Minerva, who is represented as fully armed, and the presence of

\* Hist. Nat. lib. xxxv. c. 43. Ed. Hard.

† Hist. Nat. lib. xxxv. c. 12.

several warriors engaged in battle, or dying of their wounds, prove that it must represent a battle, although what precise battle we cannot determine with certainty.

The basso-rilievo discovered in the year 1812 near Paulizza in Arcadia, supposed to have been the ancient Phigaleia, and now preserved in the British Museum, belonged to the temple of Apollo Epicurius. It represents the battle of the Centaurs and Lapithæ; and the ability displayed in their execution, the conception of the whole, and the composition of the various groups, although executed with some heaviness and disproportion, are characterized by such high qualities as would alone suffice to fix their era next to that of Phidias; but happily we are not left on this interesting point to mere conjecture, for we know from Pausanias that the temple of Apollo Epicurius was built by Ictinus, the architect who superintended the construction of the Parthenon.

The Æginetan artists of the greatest celebrity were Glaucus and Onatas. The former was employed by Gelon, king of Syracuse, to make a chariot and four horses; and Pausanias has preserved a large catalogue of the works of the latter, among which was a colossal statue of Apollo in brass, and a Ceres which he made for the inhabitants of Phigaleia. The sculpture of the Æginetan school had much that was grand and imposing, and prepared the way for that high degree of perfection which characterizes the second or Phidian period.

(*To be continued.*)

#### A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS," &c.

SIR,

ANTICIPATING, with much interest, your reply to the candid and earnest inquiries of your unknown correspondent, Matilda Y., I am led to hope that you will permit me to have some share with you in the pleasant task of confirming an honest mind in the truth. Subject always to your animadversion and correction, so far as I may seem to you to be led astray by my peculiar love for the works of the artist to whom her letter refers, I yet trust that in most of the remarks I have to make on the points which have perplexed her, I shall be expressing not only your own opinions, but those of every other accomplished artist who is really acquainted—and which of our English masters is not?—with the noble system of poetry and philosophy which has been put forth on canvass, during the last forty years, by the great painter who has presented us with the almost unparalleled example of a man winning for himself the unanimous plaudits of his generation and time, and then casting them away like dust, that he may build his monument—*ære perennius*.

Your correspondent herself, in saying that mere knowledge of *pictures* cannot qualify a man for the office of a critic, has touched the first source of the schisms of the present, and of all time, in questions of pictorial merit. We are overwhelmed with a tribe of critics who are fully imbued with every kind of knowledge which is useful to the picture-dealer, but with none that is important to the artist. They know where a picture *has* been retouched, but not where it *ought* to have been; they know if it has been injured, but not if the injury is to be regretted. They are unques-

tionable authorities on all matters relating to the panel or the canvass, to the varnish or the vehicle, while they remain in entire ignorance of that which the vehicle conveys. They are well acquainted with the technical qualities of every master's touch; and when their discrimination fails, plume themselves on indisputable tradition, and point triumphantly to the documents of pictorial genealogy. But they never go *quite* far enough back; they stop *one* step short of the real original; they reach the human one, but never the Divine. Whatever, under the present system of study, the connoisseur of the gallery may learn or know, there is one thing he does *not* know,—and that is nature. It is a pitiable thing to hear a man like Dr. Waagen, about to set the seal of his approbation, or the brand of his reprobation, on all the pictures in our island, expressing his insipid astonishment on his first acquaintance with the sea. "For the *first* time I understood the truth of their pictures (Backhuysen's and Van de Velde's), and the refined art with which, by intervening dashes of sunshine, near or at a distance, and *ships to animate the scene*, they produce such a charming variety on the surface of the sea." For the first time! And yet this gallery-bred judge, this discriminator of coloured shreds and canvass patches, who has no idea how ships animate the sea, until—charged with the fates of the Royal Academy—he ventures his invaluable person from Rotterdam to Greenwich, will walk up to the work of a man whose brow is hard with the spray of a hundred storms, and characterize it as "wanting in truth of clouds and waves!" Alas for Art, while such judges sit enthroned on their apathy to the beautiful, and their ignorance of the true, and with a canopy of canvass between them and the sky, and a wall of tradition, which may not be broken through, concealing from them the horizon, hurl their darkened verdicts against the works of men, whose night and noon have been wet with the dew of heaven,—dwelling on the deep sea, or wandering among the solitary places of the earth, until they have "made the mountains, waves, and skies a part, of them and of their souls."

When information so narrow is yet the whole stock in trade of the highest authorities of the day, what are we to expect from the lowest? Dr. Waagen is a most favourable specimen of the tribe of critics; a man, we may suppose, impartial, above all national or party prejudice, and intimately acquainted with that half of his subject (the technical half), which is all we can reasonably expect to be known by one who has been trained in the painting-room instead of the fields. No authority is more uncontroversial in all questions of the genuineness of old pictures. He has at least the merit—not common among those who talk most of the old masters—of knowing what he *does* admire, and will not fall into the same rapture before an execrable copy as before the original. If, then, we find a man of this real judgment in those matters to which his attention has been directed, entirely incapable, owing to his ignorance of nature, of estimating a modern picture, what can we hope from those lower critics who are unacquainted even with those technical characters which they have opportunities of learning? What, for instance, are we to anticipate from the sapient lucubrations of the critic—for some years back the disgrace of the pages of Blackwood—who in one breath displays his knowledge of nature, by styling a painting of a furze bush in the bed of a mountain torrent a specimen of the "high pastoral," and in the next his knowledge of Art, by informing us that Mr. Lee "reminds him of Gainsborough's best manner, but is inferior to him in composition!" We do not mean to say any thing



against Mr. Lee; but can we forbear to smile at the hopeless innocence of the man's novitiate, who could be reminded by them of landscapes powerful enough in colour to take their place beside those of Rembrandt or Rubens? A little attention will soon convince your correspondent of the utter futility or falsehood of the ordinary critiques of the press; and there could, I believe, even at present, be little doubt in her mind as to the fitting answer to the question, whether we are to take the opinion of the accomplished artist or of the common newsmonger, were it not for a misgiving which, be she conscious of it or not, is probably floating in her mind, — whether that can really be *great Art* which has no influence whatsoever on the multitude, and is appreciable only by the initiated few. And this is the real question of difficulty. It is easy to prove that such and such a critic is wrong; but not so, to prove that what everybody dislikes is right. It is fitting to pay respect to Sir Augustus Callcott, but is it so to take his word against all the world?

This inquiry requires to be followed with peculiar caution. For, by setting at defiance the judgment of the public, we in some sort may appear to justify that host of petty scribblers, and contemptible painters, who in all time have used the same plea in defence of their rejected works, and have received in consequence merciless chastisement from contemporary and powerful authors or painters, whose reputation was as universal as it was just. "Mes ouvrages," said Rubens to his challenger, Abraham Janssens, "ont été exposés en Italie, et en Espagne, sans que j'aie reçu la nouvelle de leur condamnation. Vous n'avez qu'à soumettre les vôtres à la même épreuve." "Je défie," says Boileau, "tous les auteurs les plus mécontents du public, de me citer un bon livre que le public ait jamais rebuté, à moins qu'ils ne mettent en ce rang leur écrits, de la bonté desquels eux seuls sont persuadés."

Now the fact is, that the whole difficulty of the question is caused by the ambiguity of this word — the "public." Whom does it include? People continually forget that there is a *separate* public for every picture, and for every book. Appealed to with reference to any particular work, the public is that class of persons who possess the knowledge which it presupposes, and the faculties to which it is addressed. With reference to a new edition of Newton's *Principia*, the "public" means little more than the Royal Society. With reference to one of Wordsworth's poems, it means all who have hearts. With reference to one of Moore's, all who have passions. With reference to the works of Hogarth, it means those who have worldly knowledge, — to the works of Giotto, those who have religious faith. Each work must be tested exclusively by the fiat of that *particular* public to whom it is addressed. We will listen to no comments on Newton from people who have no mathematical knowledge; to none on Wordsworth from those who have no hearts; to none on Giotto from those who have no religion. Therefore, when we have to form a judgment of any new work, the question "What do the public say to it?" is indeed of vital importance; but we must always inquire first, who are *its* public? We must not submit a treatise on moral philosophy to a conclave of horse-jockeys, nor a work of deep artistical research to the writers for the Art Union.

The public, then, we repeat, when referred to with respect to a particular work, consist only of those who have knowledge of its subject, and are possessed of the faculties to which it is addressed. If it fail of touching *these*, the work is a bad one; but it in no degree militates against it that it is rejected by those to whom it does not appeal. To whom, then,

let us ask, and to *what* public, do the works of Turner appeal? To those only, we reply, who have profound and disciplined acquaintance with nature, ardent poetical feeling, and keen eye for colour (a faculty far more rare than an ear for music). They are deeply toned poems, intended for all who love poetry, but not for those who delight in mimickries of wine glasses and nutshells. They are deep treatises on natural phenomena, intended for all who are acquainted with such phenomena; but not for those who, like the painter Barry, are amazed at finding the realities of the Alps grander than the imaginations of Salvator, and assert that they saw the moon from the Mont Cenis four times as big as usual, "from being so much nearer to it!" \* And they are studied melodies of exquisite colour, intended for those who have perception of colour; not for those who fancy that all trees are Prussian green. Then comes the question, were the works of Turner *ever* rejected by any person possessing even partially these qualifications? We answer boldly, never. On the contrary, they are universally hailed by *this* public with an enthusiasm not undeserving in appearance, at least to those who are debarred from sharing in it, of its usual soubriquet — the Turner mania.

Is, then, the number of those who are acquainted with the truth of nature so limited? So it has been asserted by one† who knew much both of art and nature, and both were glorious in his country.

- III. Οὐ μέντοι εἰώθασιν ἄνθρωποι ὀνομάζειν οὕτως.  
ΣΩ. Πότερον, ὦ Ἱππία, οἱ εἰδότες, ἢ οἱ μὴ εἰδότες;  
III. Οἱ πολλοί.  
ΣΩ. Εἰσὶ δ' οὗτοί οἱ εἰδότες τᾶληθές, οἱ πολλοί;  
III. Οὐ δῆρα.

HIPPIAS MAJOR.

Now, we are not inclined to go quite so far as this. There are many subjects with respect to which the multitude *are* cognizant of truth, or at least of *some* truth, and those subjects may be generally characterized as every thing which materially concerns themselves or their interests. The public are acquainted with the nature of their own passions, and the point of their own calamities,—can laugh at the weakness they feel, and weep at the miseries they have experienced; but all the sagacity they possess, be it how great soever, will not enable them to judge of likeness to that which they have never seen, nor to acknowledge principles on which they have never reflected. Of a comedy or a drama, an epigram or a ballad, they are judges from whom there is no appeal; but not of the representation of facts which they have never examined, of beauties which they have never loved. It is not sufficient that the facts or the features of nature be around us, while they

\* This is a singular instance of the profound ignorance of landscape in which great and intellectual painters of the human form may remain; an ignorance, which commonly renders their remarks on landscape painting nugatory, if not false.

† Plato.—"Hippias. Men do not commonly say so.

Socrates. Who do not say so,—those who know, or those who do not know?

Hippias. The multitude.

Socrates. Are then the multitude acquainted with truth?

Hippias. Certainly not."

The answer is put into the mouth of the sophist; but put as an established fact, which he cannot possibly deny.

are not within us. We may walk day by day through grove and meadow, and scarcely know more concerning them than is known by bird and beast, that the one has shade for the head and the other softness for the foot. It is not true that "the eye it cannot choose but see;" unless we obey the following condition, and go forth "in a wise passiveness," free from that plague of our own hearts which brings the shadows of ourselves, and the tumult of our petty interests and impatient passions, across the light and calm of nature. We do not sit at the feet of our mistress to listen to her teaching; but we seek her only to drag from her that which may suit our purpose, to see in her the confirmation of a theory, or find in her fuel for our pride. Nay, do we often go to her even thus? Have we not rather cause to take to ourselves the full weight of Wordsworth's noble appeal—

"Vain pleasures of luxurious life!  
For ever with yourselves at strife,  
Through town and country, both deranged  
By affectations interchanged,  
And all the perishable gauds  
That heaven-deserted man applauds.  
When will your hapless patrons learn  
To watch and ponder, to discern  
The freshness, the eternal youth  
Of admiration sprung from truth,  
From beauty infinitely growing  
Upon a mind with love o'erflowing:  
To sound the depths of every art  
That seeks its wisdom through the heart?"

When *will* they learn it? Hardly, we fear, in this age of steam and iron, luxury and selfishness. We grow more and more artificial day by day, and see less and less worthiness in those pleasures which bring with them no morbid excitement, in that knowledge which affords us no opportunity of display. Your correspondent may rest assured that those who do not *care* for nature, who do not love her, *cannot* see her. A few of her phenomena lie on the surface; the nobler number lie deep, and are the reward of watching and of thought. The artist may choose *which* he will render: no human art can render both. If he paint the surface, he will catch the crowd; if he paint the depth, he will be admired only—but with how deep and fervent admiration none but they who feel it can tell—by the thoughtful and observant few.

There are some admirable observations on this subject in your December number ("An Evening's Gossip with a Painter"); but there is one circumstance with respect to the works of Turner which yet farther limits the number of their admirers. They are not prosaic statements of the phenomena of nature,—they are statements of them under the influence of ardent feeling; they are, in a word, the most fervid and real poetry which the English nation is at present producing. Now, not only is this proverbially an age in which poetry is little cared for, but even with those who have most love of it, and most need of it, it requires, especially if high and philosophical, an attuned, quiet, and exalted frame of mind for its enjoyment; and if dragged into the midst of the noisy interests of everyday life, may easily be made ridiculous or offensive. Wordsworth, recited by Mr. Wakley in the House of Commons, in the middle of a finan-

cial debate, would sound, in all probability, very like Mr. Wakley's own verses. Wordsworth, read in the stillness of a mountain hollow, has the force of the mountain waters. What would be the effect of a passage of Milton recited in the middle of a pantomime, or of a dreamy stanza of Shelley upon the Stock Exchange? Are we to judge of the nightingale by hearing it sing in broad daylight in Cheapside? For just such a judgment do we form of Turner by standing before his pictures in the Royal Academy. It is a strange thing that the public never seem to suspect that there may be a poetry in painting, to meet which, some preparation of sympathy, some harmony of circumstance is required; and that it is just as impossible to see half a dozen great pictures as to read half a dozen great poems at the same time, if their tendencies or their tones of feeling be contrary or discordant. Let us imagine what would be the effect on the mind of any man of feeling, to whom an eager friend, desirous of impressing upon him the merits of different poets, should read to him successively, and without a pause, the following passages, in which lie something of the prevailing characters of the works of six of our greatest modern artists:—

- LANDSEER. "His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,  
Show'd he was nane o' Scotland's dougs,  
But whalpit some place far abroad,  
Whar sailors gang to fish for cod."
- MARTIN. "Far in the horizon to the north appear'd,  
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd  
In battailous aspéct, and nearer view  
Bristled with upright beams innumerable  
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields  
Various, with boastful argument portray'd."
- WILKIE. "The risin' moon began to glow'r  
The distant Cumnock hills out owre,  
To count her horns, wi' a' my pow'r,  
I set mysel' ;  
But whether she had three or fow'r  
I couldna tell."
- EASTLAKE. "And thou, who tell'st me to forget,  
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet."
- STANFIELD. "Ye mariners of England  
Who guard our native seas,  
Whose flag has braved a thousand years  
The battle and the breeze."
- TURNER. "The point of one white star is quivering still,  
Deep in the orange light of widening dawn,  
Beyond the purple mountains. Through a chasm  
Of wind-divided mist the darker lake  
Reflects it, now it fades: it gleams again,  
As the waves fall, and as the burning threads  
Of woven cloud unravel in pale air,  
'Tis lost! and through yon peaks of cloudlike snow  
The roseate sunlight quivers."

Precisely to such advantage as the above passages, so placed\*, appear, are

\* It will be felt at once that the more serious and higher passages generally suffer most. But Stanfield, little as it may be thought, suffers grievously in the

the works of any painter of mind seen in the Academy. None suffer more than Turner's, which are not only interfered with by the prosaic pictures around them, but neutralize each other. Two works of his, side by side, destroy each other to a dead certainty; for each is so vast, so complete, so demandant of every power, so sufficient for every desire of the mind, that it is utterly impossible for two to be comprehended together. Each must have the undivided intellect, and each is destroyed by the attraction of the other; and it is the chief power and might of these pictures, that they are works for the closet and the heart—works to be dwelt upon separately and devotedly, and then chiefly when the mind is in its highest tone, and desirous of a beauty which may be food for its immortality. It is the very stamp and essence of the purest poetry, that it can only be so met or understood; and that the clash of common interests, and the roar of the selfish world, must be hushed about the heart, before it can hear the still, small voice, wherein rests the power communicated from the Holiest.\*

Can, then, — will be, if I mistake not, the final inquiry of your correspondent, — can, then, we ordinary mortals, — can I, who am not Sir Augustus Calcott nor Sir Francis Chantrey, ever derive any pleasure from works of this lofty character? Heaven forbid, we reply, that it should be otherwise. *Nothing* more is necessary for the appreciation of them, than that which is necessary for the appreciation of any great writer, — the quiet study of him with an humble heart. There are, indeed, technical qualities, difficulties overcome, and principles developed, which are reserved for the enjoyment of the artist; but these do not add to the influence of the picture. On the contrary, we must break through its charm, before we can comprehend its means, and “murder to dissect.” The picture is intended not for artists alone, but for all who love what it portrays; and so little doubt have we of the capacity of all to understand the works in question, that we have the most confident expectation, within the next fifty years, of seeing the name of Turner placed on the same impregnable height with that of Shakspeare. Both have committed errors of taste and judgment. In both, it is, or will be, heresy even to feel those errors, so entirely are they overbalanced by the gigantic powers of whose impetuosity they are the result. So soon as the public are convinced, by the maintained testimony of high authority, that Turner is worth understanding, they will try to understand him; and if they try, they can. Nor are they now, as is commonly thought, despised or defied by him. He has too much respect for them to endeavour to please them by falsehood. He will not win for himself a hearing by the betrayal of his message.

Finally, then, we would recommend your correspondent, first, to divest herself of every atom of lingering respect or regard for the common criticism of the press, and to hold fast by the authority of Calcott, Chantrey,

Academy; just as the fine passage from Campbell is ruined by its position between the perfect tenderness of Byron and Shelley. The more vulgar a picture is, the better it bears the Academy.

\* “Although it is in verse that the most consummate skill in composition is to be looked for, and all the artifices of language displayed, yet it is in verse only that we throw off the yoke of the world, and are, as it were, privileged to utter our deepest and holiest feelings. Poetry in this respect may be called the salt of the earth. We express in it, and receive in it, sentiments for which, were it not for this permitted medium, the usages of the world would neither allow utterance nor acceptance.”—*Southey's Colloquies*. Such allowance is never made to the painter. In him inspiration is called insanity,—in him the sacred fire, possession.

Landseer, and Stanfield; and this, not because we would have her *slavishly* subject to any authority but that of her own eyes and reason, but because we would not have her blown about with every wind of doctrine, before she has convinced her reason, or learned to use her eyes. And if she can draw at all, let her make careful studies of any natural objects that may happen to come in her way,—sticks, leaves, or stones,—and of distant atmospheric effects on groups of objects; not for the sake of the drawing itself, but for the sake of the powers of attention and accurate observation which thus only can be cultivated. And let her make the study, not thinking of this artist or that; not conjecturing what Harding would have done, or Stanfield, or Callcott, with her subject; not trying to draw in a bold style, or a free style, or any other style; but drawing *all* she *sees*, as far as may be in her power, earnestly, faithfully, unselectingly; and, which is perhaps the more difficult task of the two, *not* drawing what she does *not* see. Oh, if people did but know how many lines nature *suggests* without *showing*, what different art should we have! And let her never be discouraged by ill success. She will seldom have gained more knowledge than when she most feels her failure. Let her use every opportunity of examining the works of Turner; let her try to copy them, then try to copy some one else's, and observe which presents most of that kind of difficulty which she found in copying nature. Let her, if possible, extend her acquaintance with wild natural scenery of every kind and character, endeavouring, in each species of scenery, to distinguish those features which are expressive and harmonious from those which are unaffecting or incongruous; and after a year or two of such discipline as this, let her judge for herself. No authority need then, or can then, be very influential with her. Her own pleasure in works of true greatness\* will be too real, too instinctive, to be persuaded or laughed out of her. We bid her, therefore, heartily good speed, with this final warning:—Let her beware, in going to nature, of taking with her the commonplace dogmas or dicta of art. Let her not look for what is like Titian, or like Claude, for composed form, or arranged chiaroscuro; but believe that every thing which God has made is beautiful, and that every thing which nature teaches is true. Let her beware, above every thing, of that wicked pride which makes man think he can dignify God's glorious creations, or exalt the majesty of his universe. Let her be humble, we repeat, and earnest. Truth was never sealed, if so sought. And once more we bid her good speed, in the words of our poet moralist:—

"Enough of Science and of Art  
Seal up these barren leaves;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches, and receives."

I have the honour, to be, Sir,  
Your obedient humble servant,  
The Author of "Modern Painters."

\* We have not sufficiently expressed our concurrence in the opinion of her friend, that Turner's modern works are his greatest. His early ones are nothing but amplifications of what others have done, or hard studies of every-day truth. His later works no one but himself could have conceived: they are the result of the most exalted imagination acting with the knowledge acquired by *means* of his former works.

## ON DRAWING FROM MODELS.

A COMMITTEE of the House of Commons having been appointed to inquire into the state of the Fine Arts of this country, and into the best means of promoting the Fine Arts in connection with manufactures, various schools have resulted, most unfortunately denominated Schools of Design, for the purpose of teaching practical drawing as applicable to the purposes of artisans, trade, and manufactures. One school was established by Government in Somerset House, in the upper rooms formerly belonging to the Royal Academy. From this school a secession took place of some of the promoters, who were dissatisfied with the course proposed at Somerset House; and they established another school at Exeter Hall, which has since given rise to several private speculations on the same plan, namely, drawing from geometrical models — cubes, globes, &c.; and this frenzy has travelled far and wide, penetrated into Scotland, and nobody knows where else. And artists are applied to, to give their approbation and sanction by appending their names to the prospectuses of the schools where this mode of tuition is adopted. Mr. Williams, “who does the Fine Arts” in the Spectator, (no relation, we believe, of Mr. Butler Williams, the master or superintendent at Exeter Hall,) has taken the method under his protecting wing, and endeavoured to aid it by his “powerful pen,” in some papers published in the Art Union, and in a pamphlet called “Elements of Perspective, or the Science of Delineating;” in which, after copiously appropriating without acknowledgment the preliminary observations in the “Science of Drawing” and “Imitative Art”\* relative to “the power of drawing residing in the head and not in the hand”—in the real science of drawing, or knowledge of the forms to be represented, and not in the practical movement of the fingers,—he proceeds to descant at length upon the advantage of drawing from *solid* geometrical forms, and concludes with recommending parties to begin with superficial *plane* forms, triangles, squares, and circles cut out of tin!!! He recommends, secondly, for private use, a box of small models devised by a friend of his, who adds, what are called the Elements of Perspective to aid the beginner in learning to represent these geometrical solids, which Mr. Williams further recommends as capable of being piled one upon another so as to resemble architecture—“Heaven save the mark!”—and only requiring the addition of some foliage to make *subjects* for PRETTY PICTURES: the very thing we do not want artisans to attempt—the very objection stated by Mr. D. R. Hay to the Committee of the House of Commons, as having arisen to the school he had established in Edinburgh for the purpose of his trade, where the students preferred starving in a profession. We cannot pass these Elements of Perspective over without remarking, that they are so utterly erroneous as to describe the “point of distance” (which really represents the arbitrary distance that the spectator is supposed or determined to be from the base line of the picture) as being “the point to which all lines should be drawn which incline from the surface of the picture at the angle of forty-five degrees!!!” together with all the blunders which must necessarily result from such a fundamental

\* “The Science of Drawing, being a Progressive Series of the Characteristic Forms of Nature, Trees, Animals, and Human Beings:” by FRANK HOWARD. Pickering.—“Imitative Art; or the Means of representing Objects as affected by Aerial and Linear Perspective:” by FRANK HOWARD. Darton and Clark.

error, and published at 4s.; but without a tithe of the information contained in Pinnock's "Catechism of Perspective" at nine-pence. A Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins has followed with a pamphlet under the title of "The Science of Drawing simplified,"—an ignorant piece of inconsistent eulogy upon the system of drawing from geometrical solids, as containing the above-mentioned advantage of resembling architecture, and impudently misquoting a passage from Flaxman, as from his "Lecture on the Science of Drawing," when there is no such lecture (the term never having been used till adopted as the title of the progressive series of the characteristic forms of nature above alluded to), while his simplification consists merely in packing his models into a smaller compass. This pamphlet and box of models were puffed by Mr. Williams in the *Spectator* and the *Art Union*; but we have no hesitation in saying, that however amusing these models may be as a toy, or however useful to an artist of sluggish invention, that a good Noah's Ark would form an infinitely more valuable course of study for a beginner, whether intended for an artisan or an artist. He would at least learn that some animals had short legs, and some had long ones; the characteristic difference between an elephant and a jackass, &c.; but from these geometrical solids he can learn no more than can be told him in a few seconds, can be infinitely better represented by a ruler and pair of compasses than by hand, and which will be absolutely of no use whatever, either in drawing ornamental patterns or the objects of nature.

The models used at Exeter Hall have the peculiarity of being merely representations of solids by wire outlines, if such a term may be used. These have the merit of affording demonstrative elucidations of the *effects* of linear perspective upon regular forms; but except as objects of reference, for the purposes of explanation, they are absolutely of less use than the solid models; for these latter will show the light and shadow on round and flat surfaces requisite to convey the impression of substance. In fine, as regards these models, both solid and hollow, they may be useful in the hands of an experienced master, as objects of reference for practical demonstration of the effects of perspective and light and shadow, but as objects to draw from they are worse than useless; for they can be represented by mechanical means, and only take up that time which had been better bestowed in acquiring that science or knowledge of objects, and the effect of external influences upon them, which will find employment for the longest life ever enjoyed by artist or artisan.

The school at Exeter Hall have devoted much time, and we believe have not yet given it up, in the pursuit of a shadow to which they have attached the name of "The Science of Drawing,"—meaning a capability of drawing without any knowledge of the forms to be represented; but which is more justly to be designated Imitative Art, and treated of under that name by the author of this paper in the work above referred to. It consists in the knowledge of the means of representing any surfaces under any given effects, which may be considered as a series of graphical or pictorial facts capable of being communicated in a few words with the assistance of diagrams, and constitute a portion of that part of drawing which may be *taught* in contradistinction from being *learned*. This Imitative Art can extend only to enabling the student to *copy* any object placed before him, a qualification which no artisan requires: the drawing requisite for *him* consists in the power of representing any forms he may require for the communication of his ideas to his employer or his workmen; and this can only be obtained from a very different course, by which the real science of drawing, the



knowledge of the forms to be represented, can be acquired. To this branch of the subject we shall return in our next paper, which will be a review of the works published by Mr. D. R. Hay of Edinburgh, on Colour, the Harmony of Form and Sound, and the Laws of Proportion, professedly intended for the use of artisans.

There is another set of models used at Exeter Hall, which, if it be considered *necessary* that *artisans* should be able to draw the *human figure*, we consider admirably calculated for the purpose. These are a progressive series of the characteristic forms of heads, hands, feet, and whole figures in Alto Relievo, precisely upon the plan of the author, as set forth in his work on the Science of Drawing. These models commence with rude but characteristic representations, affording the general form and proportion; the next are a degree more definite; and they thus proceed to details of eyelids, finger-nails, &c.,\* and may, of course, be carried up to any point of minutiae that may be required. From these models, the students will learn the general proportions and character of the parts of the human figure, and their connection. We should advise their always commencing with the whole figure, and then descending to the parts, upon the principles explained in the Science of Drawing, and which the author has no hesitation in saying have given him the "hasty facility," upon which he is complimented by Mr. Foggo, under the name of Mr. Clarke, in his threepenny catalogue of the Cartoons exhibited in the competition for employment in Fresco painting,—which ought to be called FRISKO, for the "hasty facility" or rapid accuracy which it demands.

If artisans require a knowledge or capability of representing the human figure, it must surely be essential that they should give the characteristic proportions or types of the forms they profess to represent; these are intelligible and agreeable to all. The refinement of form constituting style, or the beauty of minutiae, they can never hope to attain to, unless qualified to take their place as Artists, nor would they be understood or appreciated by the public for whom these ornamental designs are intended. This subject might be pursued further with advantage in defining the difference between imitation as a qualification of the Fine Arts, and as an element of ornamental invention; but this is not the place for it. And, in conclusion, it need only be observed, that the method recommended is precisely that in which each person learns his mother-tongue. First, he is taught to speak a sense or meaning without reference to grammar; next, to speak grammatically; then to spell and to understand the rules of grammar. From which he may advance to elocution and poetry.

FRANK HOWARD.

(To be continued.)

\* The Editor must say he cannot agree with the Author here. The most that can be said is, that the fact assumed will *admit* of a question: it is possible that beginning with *generalities* instead of *particulars* may answer, but it is a well-known fact that Art has begun and proceeded from exactly the opposite direction!

## EXHIBITION-TIME APPROACHING!

THOSE whom it may concern are requested to turn their attention to the fact, that the period is at hand which has always been found full of dismay, disappointment, injury, and sometimes ruin, to Artists. Will it arrive again without any preparation being made to meet and avert the evils it is sure to bring? Are the Exhibition Rooms *grown larger*, or the number of those who aspire to find places in them grown less? If these remain the same, are Artists better prepared than last year to take the consequences? Can nothing be done? Will mere *grumbling* satisfy? Shall the host of pictures, which it is *impossible* to hang upon the walls of the Exhibition Rooms, be carried back quietly to the places from whence they came, and take their station against the wall with dozens of others in the same predicament? Has the absurd fear subsided, that the noble Governors of one Institution and the Members of another will feel any displeasure if Artists do for themselves what it is impossible they can do for them—provide Exhibition Rooms? Are a subscription of seven or ten shillings a piece, a little unity of purpose, co-operation, and a little trouble, such difficult matters, that they cannot be overcome by men who have, in their place, to put up with serious loss and bitter disappointment? An exhibition of the non-admitted pictures of the season would form a curious feature in the character of an annual display. Is it impossible to find a locality for such an interesting and useful purpose?

## THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND ROYAL COLLECTIONS.

THE appointment of two eminent Artists as Curators of the works of art in the above-named establishments is a happy indication of a good feeling for Art and an improved Taste having made their way into the highest places of the State, and is hailed with satisfaction by the whole body of artists. Nothing whatever is to be said against the gentleman who lately held these offices and others, except that he was eminently unfit for them. He is said to have been an intelligent and well-informed man in his own particular pursuit; but that pursuit did not qualify him for the situation into which he was put. Two or three attempts, in an *impartial* Journal called THE TIMES, have been made to cast odium upon these appointments, and to recommend an adherence to the old system; but they have fallen, among thousands of such, by their own weight of stupidity and impertinence. On the appearance of the first of these, signed "An Amateur," the Editor of this work took the trouble to write an argumentative letter on the propriety of these appointments, and to beg its insertion; but as it had a tendency to show the other side of the question in opposition to "An Amateur," it was of course rejected. The question, however, was not settled; for another appeared, taking up the views of "An Amateur," and recommending a picture-dealer instead of a painter. Lord Liverpool, it seems, recommended that the post of keeper of the National Gallery should be held by a person competent to judge and decide upon the authenticity and market value of ancient pictures. Now it happens unfortunately that whatever might have been the acquirements of the late keeper, his talents were unequal to this, for an especial reason; namely, that in difficult questions of this sort no one

person is or can be sufficient authority. And again, if even it were so, or could be, it ought not; because where large sums of the public money are to be disposed of, more than one voice, one *opinion*, ought to be employed, lest by any accident there should be some leaning to the interests of self or others. Without the slightest disposition to reflect on the late keeper, or any body else, it may be fearlessly said that if instances of glaring misunderstanding and the misapplication of money are wanting, you need go no further than the National Gallery to find them. An acquaintance with the hands of the masters is certainly something in distinguishing a Raphael from a Rubens; but to know, with the proper intelligence, the peculiar excellences of each, is a far higher qualification, and one that can be turned to more important account. In the operations of cleaning and restoring pictures, the knowledge so strongly insisted upon is not found on every occasion to be fully equal to its object; and it is clear that even here the knowledge of the Artist might, upon occasion, be employed to no small advantage. As a proof of this fact, let any one who has an eye for such matters look at the pictures in any collection, and see how many lamentable instances he can find of lights scrubbed bare, and shadows and delicate passages removed and destroyed altogether! A knowledge of the masters becomes indeed a difficult study, after their works have passed the ordeal of the picture-cleaners! No fair and sensible person will undervalue the talents and claims of those gentlemen by whose exertion most of the finest works of art have been brought into the country, *maugre* all that can be said about speculations of gain. Honour and profit are motives which, when combined, none need be ashamed of; and, in the view of any impartial person, these will be readily given to the respectable part of the profession of picture-dealing; nor will any one of that body complain that its functionaries are not sufficiently respected, when it is remembered that the late Mr. Seguiet had influence enough to succeed against the late Sir Thomas Lawrence, when that great artist aspired to the keepership of the National Gallery.

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#### INSTITUTE OF THE FINE ARTS.

A GENERAL Meeting of the Members of this Society was held on the 16th December, at the Great Room of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts in the Adelphi. The Secretary read a report detailing the state and prospects of the Institute, with the replies to certain letters which had been addressed to noblemen and gentlemen with a view of advancing its interests. Most of them were highly favourable to the views and objects of the Society. That from Lord Francis Egerton was received with a demonstration of feeling which the admirers of superior intelligence, taste, and a sympathy with men engaged in a great object, ever delight to bestow. No *great names* (God save the mark!) have as yet been absorbed and taken up into the body; but of the humble, who possibly may yet be exalted, about 220 are enrolled. The objects of this Society appear still not clearly defined;—a proof how difficult it is to convey a strong impression of motives and objects, where the end sought does not promise direct and immediate benefits to *self*. Mr. Park read a paper on the advantages of forming a gallery of casts of every existing work in Sculpture,

for the purpose of study; and recommended a plan which would evidently afford great advantages to Art and the cause of Taste.

Mr. Aglio entered very freely into an exposition of his forty years' experience in Fresco-painting, and answered in a clear, liberal, and sensible way such inquiries as were put to him. A resolution was passed, that the Society views with sincere interest and satisfaction the appointment of two eminent Artists to the situations of keeper of the National Gallery, and Curator of the Royal Collections, in the place of one picture-dealer. A gentleman present drew the attention of the company to the splendid works of Barry which decorate the walls of this establishment. He observed, that he had attended to the effect of these pictures for many years past; that no change had taken place in them,—they looked bright and effective in all lights; that they had undergone no cleaning; and, it was worthy of remark, were quite devoid of any gloss or shining that interfered with their being perfectly well seen in any direction. It is worthy of remark that these works were executed in simple oil and turpentine, and with a very few colours, judging from Barry's own recommendation on the subject of colouring: it would be curious to ascertain the fact. It is to be observed, that although the canvasses of these pictures are of immense extent in length and height, no *bagging* or defect of surface is observable in them. The attempts which have been made to recommend fresco *because* it does not *shine*, and to reject oil painting because it does, *at the pleasure of the operator*, are about as silly as most other things which have been said on that *fertile* subject. M. De la Roche is too sensible an artist to have committed his late great work to the keeping of any material but OIL COLOURS.

#### A FOUR YEARS' RESIDENCE IN ITALY.

WHILST I sat waiting for my supper with that kind of impatience and disturbance with which I am disposed to charge my stomach rather than my philosophy, although, I must confess, *that* does break down upon some occasions, and certainly stood in great jeopardy here, I could not help reflecting upon the *voices* of the women of Italy generally, and wondering that, amongst all I had read and heard of that country,—its bright skies, bright eyes, and particularly its soft and musical language,—not a word had been said on the peculiar character of the voice of the Italians. I was just now in a position to have a fair sample, and a full opportunity of judging of the speaking voices of Italian women. There were six or eight of them all employed in the operation of preparing supper for the *forestieri*, and such a Babel of discordant sounds never saluted human ears before. The *signorina* of the long-legged fowls led the concert in a *\*soprana con strepito* throughout, and without rest, pause, or *rallentando*. The parts of the others were pretty *full*, and contained many more *fortes* than *pianos*; but the *qualities* of the instruments surpass all description. Haydn, it is said, once, to please his patron, got up a concert of children's toy-instruments, — penny trumpets, drums, whistles, and other

\* In pronouncing *soprano* (sovereign) the common people every where in the Papal States substitute the *p* for the *v*, thus apparently giving the etymology of *soprano*.

noises : this must have been the "harmony of the spheres," compared with the music that now filled the house. Those sudden *unprepared* and *unresolved* discords, in the character of short cadences, which the grammarians have been pleased to consider as parts of speech, and which are called *interjections*, always frequent in Italian conversations, were here sported in a profusion and variety perfectly astounding as regards human organs, and perfectly marvellous as illustrative of the extent and number of the parts of speech. Some of these were short and abrupt as the report of a detonating ball; others long, loud, and extended, such as might be represented in print by a whole line of notes of admiration. It was a beautiful opportunity of studying every species of intonation that range on the pain-giving side of the acoustics of nature, — from a rusty hinge to the sharpening of a saw, a cat concert, or the prophetic howl of a dog. I found myself entering upon the investigation quite *con amore*, in a real philosophic way, and soon lost sight of the annoyance in the self-complacency of my own capabilities of endurance. I had had some experience in female voices whilst in Florence and Rome; and what was now offered to my notice was not a new fact, but the climax to an old one. At this particular moment it appeared the most extraordinary and cruel thing in the world, that nature should have given ears, and those musical ears, to people with such voices, or to any others under the necessity of having them so violently assaulted. Now, that the quality of Italian voices is not unfavourable to vocal and musical exertion, is pretty clearly proved by the fine examples of the children of song who are heard with so much delight in this country, and in every other. Listening to, and even looking at, Italian women generally, make you wonder where such creatures as *Catalani*, *Pasta*, *Grisi*, and some others, could possibly come from; and make you wish to know whether *their* speaking voices in ordinary could partake in any degree of the harshness which is so prevalent among their countrywomen: who can tell us? However, I feel perfectly convinced that there is a phenomenon connected with the voice of Italians, more evident by far in the females than the males, which has never been investigated. There is something in the very structure of the throat which is perceptible at a glance. It is a characteristic exhibited in sculpture, and the painting both of the past and the present time. Canova, and Thorwaldsen more than Canova, with all the sculptors now resident in Rome, never fail to give to their female figures the *Italian* throat. The English sculptors have less of it than the Italian. The painters who live at Rome of course paint it, and after their return to this country continue to characterize their females by it, whether imaginary or real personages, until they are broken of the habit. The most complete example of this peculiarity of form is to be found in the figure of Hope, (the left-hand figure of the two,) which forms part of the monument of Pius the Seventh in the church of St. Peter at Rome; — a proof that genius itself cannot resist the vitiating influence of circumstances, and an evidence of the necessity of seeing continually the purest examples both of nature and art. It has always struck me that the peculiar quality of Italian voices is somehow or other connected with the peculiarity of form. Nobody who has ears can doubt the fact that the speaking voice of Italian women generally is exceedingly harsh, in spite of the soft language they utter, and that it differs entirely from the voice of the English woman, which is, in almost every station and grade of society, characterized by a peculiarity, — a charm that belongs to and clearly indicates the *sex*. This is *not* the case in Italy: you will frequently hear voices which puzzle in that respect, and

find the charm of form and figure often destroyed by the sound of the voice. It is common to talk of the Italian *gusto* in singing, and to lament that English women almost entirely are defective in it. Many educated in Italy have a capacity for the conception, and a feeling for all the graces and effects of song; but no one that ever I heard is mistress of *that* which an Italian woman of ordinary powers overcomes with ease. Sometimes one is disposed to regard this defalcation in our fair countrywomen as the result of a want of *confidence*, an article in which an Italian female never *appears* to fail; but I doubt much whether this difference is not entirely a matter of structure and physical qualification. That the old sing-song style of execution which was so general in this country has been greatly improved, there cannot exist a doubt; but that *native powers* are equal to the perfect operatic style, the true *portamento* force and effect of Italian powers, may be doubted very much. It is no matter what pains, what culture is bestowed, — nature is supreme, and asserts her prerogative in every thing; and instead of attempting to force her from her own laws, it is much to be questioned whether it would not be more rational and promising to found a style upon native capabilities, than to force one from means and powers which are incompetent to their end. A national style is far more honourable and pleasing than a mongrel. No one who has mixed much with the Italians, heard them speak, and heard them sing, in their houses and in the fields, idle and at work, can have the shadow of a doubt that their vocal machinery is of an extraordinary kind. A peasant girl sings at her work, which is commonly nothing short of *hard labour*, with a voice that can be heard for miles; and it is no uncommon thing to see and to hear a weak and sickly-looking person, of diminutive stature and a narrow sunken chest, emaciated and bent, as is often the case in the localities of MALARIA, sing with the most perfect ease, and sitting quite still, without action or effort, pour forth a volume of voice that fills the whole space around, and perfectly astonishes you. Now, it is generally supposed that *this power* is an acquisition of art, and is *induced* by study, and by the methods taught in the schools of music; but here are people who have certainly no such advantages, and their taste and manners are as unformed, and as far removed from cultivation, as their habits and the wilds in which they live. It certainly appears that the qualities of voice necessary for singing finely, and for speaking sweetly and pleasantly, are quite independent of each other, although they may be found united in the same person. The speaking voice of Madame Vestris, for instance, is a beautiful instrument in itself, and her vocal powers are equal. In the whole four years of my sojourn in Italy I never once heard an Italian woman speak with the same music, nor in that tuneful and touching cadence, the sweet quality of which appears to belong to the tenderest affections of the heart, and may be regarded as a beautiful and peculiar trait of English women generally: in Italy nothing like it is to be found. I wish the man who has never been *touched* by this had had to endure the voices of the people of our house of entertainment at *Sezze*; it might have taught him what travellers often have occasion to learn, and sometimes want to know, — the value of *some things* left at home.

It was at *Sezze* that I experienced my first and only indisposition during the four years I sojourned among thousands who were suffering from diseases, — several of whom I saw and knew, — which are peculiar to the climate. My mishap is not worth naming, only that there was something ludicrous in it. That I had over-heated myself in getting the pony and the *carratina* up the mountain I knew perfectly well; but I thought I had taken suffi-

cient care to guard against that most common of all attacks in Italy, a *colpo d'aria*, as the natives call it. The upshot proved I had been touched by one of these *air-blows* in the head, which, facilitated by some dental imperfection, operated like magic; so that, after passing a restless night, I found myself in the morning with my face, one side of it, so swollen that I could not see at all out of one eye, and one side of my mouth was put so out of place that I could scarcely articulate a word. When my companion came to my bed-side, and saw my plight, his sympathies were so overcome by the ludicrous effect of my appearance, that he burst into a long and uncontrollable laugh, in which it would have been impossible for me to join, except on one side of my mouth. I must do his tenderness the justice to say that he tried several times to subdue his mirth, and to put on the necessary look of concern; but every time he caught a glimpse of me, he burst out into a fresh paroxysm, and at last ran out of the room. Of course he went to tell all the gossips in the house of my condition; and in one minute the same squalling set who had prepared the supper surrounded my bed, tossing their arms in the air, screaming, ejaculating, and prating, like so many people gone mad. What was to be done?—"povero signore dio buono come si fa?" *Sant Antonio*, what was to be done? Then came a consultation, and after it a recommendation of as many absurd things as would have killed an ox, the *threatened* application of which almost put me in bodily fear. I had my own notions of a remedy, and of course refused theirs. I wanted half a dozen leeches; but having never had occasion for such things, I had never learnt their name in Italian, and a dictionary, of course, was out of the question; so here was another dilemma. "*Come si fa?*"—what is to be done indeed? I tried a description of them; but the mumbling, and the faces I made, besides the *two* I had made for me by the joint operation of nature and the *colpo d'aria*, completely upset the gravity of my tender nurses, who seemed to regard my condition but as a continuation of the *divertimento* of our visit. I had just succeeded by a happily conceived *paraphrase* in making the most sedate of the women understand what I wanted: a black worm that sucks blood did the business. "*Oh! Mignatte! cospetto di Bacco si!*" They *ought* to have known what I meant,—*sicuro*. I should have them at once. My fellow-traveller undertook the commission of procuring me what I wanted; and in a short time came to me, bringing something in a *leather* bag, into which he put his hand, and pulling out a handful of *black balls* larger than walnuts, rolled them towards me upon the bed. I can't say I liked much the aspect of them, particularly when I saw some of them stretched out to their full length, which looked to my disturbed vision rather appalling. My companion recommended them, by saying they were as hungry as *volpe affamate* (famished wolves); and they certainly proved themselves worthy of the character he had given them. And now, in order to complete my cure, I thought I would try to lull myself into quietude or forgetfulness by that balm of misery, opium: dose one side of my face with it, and perhaps suffer a few drops to escape into my stomach. The effect was sudden and delightful. Sleep came, and the scene changed. I was no longer in a dull dirty chamber, but breathing the fresh air of the mountains. I crossed the plains; sometimes I walked and ran, and at others I was flying or riding in the *carratina* by the side of my companion, who handled his whip so awkwardly as to give me many blows and cuts on the face. There was plenty of delicious water, which I wanted to drink, but it was full of black balls and long ropes of leeches. I heard the shepherds' pipes, and the labourers

singing in the vineyards, but every now and then their voices changed to those of cocks and hens; and the pipes were so out of tune as to set my teeth on edge, and make my head ache. All at once it became suddenly dark; and as I was then in a house, I called loudly for a light; but nobody paid any attention to me, although thousands of people surrounded me, grinning in a most extraordinary manner one after another. I saw them brighten, and ascend into the sky like rockets, falling down again in stars of bright light and variety of colours. There then appeared figures drawn upon the wall of the room I occupied,—most uncouth things done in charcoal, with inscriptions under them, which I tried in vain to decipher. Not that I could make nothing of them; on the contrary, I found I could make any thing of them,—make them read as I liked. I had a pretty clear conviction, during the time that these fancies and phantoms were passing before me, that I was wide awake; indeed I had no notion or doubt upon the fact that I had been to sleep at all, as it did not appear to me that I had been long enough in bed to have had time, nor any thing like time, for a comfortable nap; and I rather wondered that I did not want to go to sleep, or even to get up. I was not altogether comfortable; but it was difficult to say what was the matter. After remaining in this condition for some time, and not giving myself much trouble to ascertain the truth whether I was really awake or asleep, as it did not matter, I thought I would put it to the test. So, making an effort, I called as loud as I could; but I found my voice inaudible to myself, and was the less surprised that nobody answered. Then I tried to get up; but in this I succeeded as little as in calling. I knew that opium often produced strange effects, and was quite certain nothing of consequence was the matter. After a few efforts I put up my hand; felt my face, which was stiff and sore, but evidently coming to itself again. I now looked about me, and saw that it was getting night; at all events, the chamber was very obscure, and at first it was difficult to see across it; but after an effort or two the walls at the foot of the bed and on one side were quite discernible,—and, lo and behold! there were the figures in charcoal, and the inscriptions, which had so much disturbed me. Sometimes when I looked I could see them pretty plainly; at others they appeared to have vanished, or got out of their places. If it was not so, then my eyes must be somehow or other imposed upon; or—I must be asleep. I think this state of things continued for an hour or two. Every now and then I looked, or I shut my eyes, and perhaps dozed. There were the figures, or there they were not, just as the case might happen. It was that doubtful light in which we sometimes see things, and in which the senses are made the playthings of the fancy. I had been a long time bothered by the figure at the foot of the bed,—a long sprawling figure, with his nose turned up in the air, and holding something in his hand; and under it was a short inscription which I could make neither head nor tail of,—what could it be? On the right, lower down, was some shape that looked a little like a dog, lying at the feet of the tall figure; this had an inscription under it, in long sprawling letters, and which also it was impossible to make out. All my puzzling served no purpose; and at last I was determined to stand the tantalizing no longer. So, getting out of bed, and looking towards the window, I saw that it had been closed up by a thick curtain: it was small, and the glass old, opaque, and patched, and withal covered with the ingenious tapestry of an insect of which I have rather a horror; but I managed to increase the opening, and obtain a little more light, in order to examine the enigma upon the wall. I think there is generally a peculiar curiosity to see and



to read what is drawn and written upon walls, windows, and in the margins of books from a public library. It is surprising that this curiosity should exist, since I don't think it was ever rewarded by one single scrap worth the trouble of the search; nor do I think any victim of this passion ever met with any thing so ridiculous as what I now found. The reader won't believe it, I dare say; but I must tell it nevertheless. The tall figure was a *remote* resemblance of a great English statesman; and under it was written in *exotic* characters, "*Bili Pitti!*" From one of his hands went a line to the figure at his feet, which was something like a human figure dressed in a shaggy skin, and lying something in the position of a *sphinx*: under this was written "*Robzin Criosol!*" I did not entirely believe my eyes, until I had used them next day, when they were in better condition. Who could have been the perpetrator and inventor of such an extraordinary riddle I never made out; but the idea of Billy Pitt holding Robinson Crusoe in a string made me laugh heartily, and I think half cured me. I amused myself for an hour thinking how and who could have brought the memory of such personages into so remote a place, and combined them in so ridiculous a way. I lay puzzling myself with this riddle for some time, when another inscription, written in a small hand, caught my eye. Of course I must look at this; so, leaning half out of bed, I read the following with very different sensations:—" *Francesco Sacchi Romano Comico fu in questa camera nel mese di Luglio Anno 1838 con delle tosse febbre terzane.*"

After I had made out this inscription I drew myself slowly into bed again, and began ruminating upon the condition and fate of poor Mr. Sacchi, a *comedian*, who was in that very chamber only a little month before with the *tertian fever*,—or ague fever, as it ought to be called, to give a better notion of it. Where was he now, poor fellow! Perhaps in the church burial-place,—not at all unlikely; and all his jibes, his quirks, and quiddities at an end. Here he was at all events a month ago,—perhaps occupying the same bed, and resting his burning head upon the same pillow. I did not half like the notion of being the successor in location of a man in such a predicament, and whose present state might be typified by a cranium and cross-bones, and an inscription of *memento mōri*; and I looked about, expecting to find such a one somewhere upon the walls. I knew well enough that such fevers leave no taint behind them, but I don't know why I felt so uncomfortable; my fears certainly did not affect me, so I suppose my sympathies must. The consequence was, that I resolved at once to get up, which I did with a kind of speed I cannot account for. I was dressed in two minutes, and at the end of that time found myself in the next room; where also I found it broad daylight, bright, sunny, and cheerful, making a singular contrast with the room I had just left, and all its associations. I was greeted, of course, with shouts of surprise, made up of every possible exclamation, interjection, and a few expletives which won't bear translation. On asking what o'clock it was, I found I had had rather a longer nap than I expected; for instead of its being the afternoon of the day of my leeching and dosing, it was the *day after*,—a fact which suggested to every body the possibility of my wanting something to eat, myself among the number. Ablution and a cup of coffee put me in perfect possession of myself; and I began to reason upon what had happened, and what had not happened. I had eaten nothing for thirty hours at least.

It is curious how rapidly the process of reasoning proceeds when inclination is in its favour, aided by a little stirring necessity. I had a monitor within which argued one particular point in a most irresistible way, making

the merits of the case so evident it was impossible not to feel their force. Other points were not quite so well defined,—they belonged to the higher regions of the inquiry; and although I felt perfectly well, my head was a little confused. I had an indistinct notion of certain disturbing noises I had been pestered with whilst I slept. The voices of the women rang in my ears of course; but it was not them. It was not that these noises were unlike the voices, because the voices were like every thing grating and disagreeable; but that they were nearer to me, and *so like* the crowing, screaming, cackling, clucking, fisking, and scratching of cocks and hens, that it could not be mere imitation,—it must be the reality. Going into my bedroom to ascertain if it contained a hen-roost or not, my ears were saluted by sounds similar to those I had heard; and it was quite evident to me that rather a large party of feathered occupants had just come in after the labours of the day, and were settling some knotty point, Italian-like (*id est* with much noise), before they went to sleep. Where the plague *were* they? Italians never trouble themselves much either with the past or the future; so that when they build a house they leave out the staircase, or the door, or the windows,—chimneys of course, because it is so easy to put them in afterwards. It is the easiest thing in the world to carry up a staircase, or a ladder, which does just as well, on the outside of the house, and to enter in that way is as good as any other. The lowest portion is never of any consequence, except for lumber; so that they make nothing of knocking a hole in the wall for light or air, or, what is more considered, a roosting place for fowls, a depository for eggs, and a laboratory for chickens; or when a doorway has been forgotten in the structure, or another is wanted, they make one; put up a door, and run a flight of steps through the floor, which makes a short cut up stairs into the room out of the street. This operation had been performed upon the room in which I had slept. Some boards and tops of boxes covered the aperture, which opened out of the room upon some dozen stairs that led down to the door; and lifting one of them I discovered, by the light which entered pretty freely from the street, one or two of my tormentors upon each step from the top to the bottom. I let it fall again in despair, convinced there was no chance of quiet or repose for me. When I told my companion of my forlorn condition, he congratulated himself that nothing could disturb *him*, and that *he* never slept better in his life. He had, he said, never heard a sound from the time he got into bed till the time he got out of it; *his* room was as still as a sepulchre. As I sat for a minute musing upon my disastrous condition, a thought struck me that had more than a gleam of consolation in it,—we should reduce their number at supper! But this was attended with an idea and a purpose so fell and bloody, so Ali Pacha-like and cruel, that I am ashamed to mention it. I resolved to pretend that I had an appetite nothing could appease, and to order them *all* to be killed for supper! I resolved to kill them all; to carry off the whole “at one fell swoop.” I felt, between anger and hunger, that “my great revenge had stomach for them all.” Let them die! No sooner had I mentioned the idea to my companion, who had a very ready sense of the ridiculous, and was a lover of fun, than he jumped upon his feet and capered about with delight. In a moment he was in the kitchen, which was on the same floor, and two or three rooms distant, where I heard him tell the women who were there that the sick Englishman had ordered all the fowls in the house, cocks, hens, and chickens, to be killed for supper. It is impossible to explain how this intimation was received. For the first half

second there was a kind of breathless pause, in which only the thick laugh of my companion could be heard; but directly came a shower of ejaculations of all kinds, — in short, a scream of astonishment; and then burst forth an uproar of laughter that appeared as if it would never cease. No one could ask a question, or complete a sentence, or get beyond the first word, from the convulsive effects that followed. In the midst of the *hub-bub* a word now and then might be heard; such as *quanta fame! maledetto! tutte quante?* “What, all! every one! *Diavolo*, what an appetite! Sant Antonio protect us!” My companion kept up the spirit of the thing, and insisted on every fowl in the house, old and young, going to the slaughter. He swore by all the saints in the calendar that there should not be one left to tell the tale of their fate, — that they should all be cooked. And he then proceeded to tell how, — that the old ones should be made into broth, some roasted, some done in *umido*, and others *grattinato*. At the same time he recommended the *padrona* (mistress) to think and provide something for the morning, for that there would not be left a *rib* bone to pick for breakfast. I kept expecting that an appeal would be made to my humanity; but, instead, the little shrieking lady came to ask if I knew how much such a supper would cost. As cost always alters the aspect of things, and as the culinary operations might not be completed before midnight, till which time I was in no condition to wait, I put an end to the difficulty by commuting the sentence I had passed; still determined to satisfy justice and myself, — as the Bank of England once did when forgeries upon it were so numerous, — victimize the *decimals*, and then go to supper as soon as it was ready!

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#### NOTICES.

The Editor is very happy to avail himself of the powerful aid of the Author of “Modern Painters,” in giving a reply to his long-neglected Correspondent MATILDA Y——. He is quite aware that every point of her sensible letter has not been responded to; but, besides what is given upon the present occasion, many particulars have been commented upon in various parts of this Work, and many more will find a solution in the pages of “Modern Painters.” On the general subjects of *clashing opinions* nothing need be said.

The Editor regrets that Mr. Maw’s letter did not arrive in time for the present Number. It shall appear next month, with its answer.

Mr. RIPPINGILLE has resolved to make arrangements for the reception of *Two Classes* of Pupils, PROFESSIONAL and NON-PROFESSIONAL; and intends in the next Month’s Number to give, with a little Essay on the subject, the details of a plan he means to adopt. In the interim, any particulars may be known by an application, personally or by letter, at 55. Berners Street.

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THE

# ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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## BEAUTY.

IN direct opposition to what has been so generally said and believed, namely, that we are indebted to the poets and philosophers for that idea of perfection in the human form which has been embodied in sculpture and painting, it is here asserted that the *beau idéal* is the pure and proper creation of the Artists, and that in effect and truth MAN IS INDEBTED TO ART FOR A PERFECT IMAGE OF HIMSELF.

TASTE, in its highest office and exercise, is as it were but the reflection of this *idea* thus obtained, and consists in the appreciation of what has thus been produced ; whilst in its *general* character and application it may be considered but as *the appreciation of excellence*.

The principles of Art, therefore, are necessarily the principles of Taste ; and the knowledge which the man of taste is required to possess is, with certain modifications, that of the Artist. Whatever might have been the primitive and proper application of the term *Taste*, its licentious use has tended very much to confuse its proper meaning ; so that at last it appears to conform to no rule, but may be taken to mean anything or nothing, just as its employer pleases.

It is just in this way that BEAUTY has "fallen from its high estate ;" and instead of being applicable only to an exalted conformation of forms, parts, and particulars, such as are found only in the noblest work of the creation, it is now become a mere term of approbation. In this way we have all sorts of *beauties*, and all sorts of *tastes* ; and from speaking of a beautiful woman we descend to speak of a beautiful lap-dog, a carpet, or a kettle-holder. Exactly in the same way we speak of tastes : a man writes with taste, paints with taste, judges with taste, plays, sings, dances, dresses with taste ; the coat, the hat, and the boots he wears are made with taste ! If he attends exhibitions or executions, frequents the gaming-table, the turf, the ring, the tavern, or likes such sights as bull-baiting, cock-fighting, rat-catching, or is addicted to smoking, taking snuff, and so on, we say he has a *taste* for such things ; and although it would be in vain to attempt to fix a standard for the use of the term, it by no means follows that Taste itself has no principles, and is incapable of being

defined and explained. "That there is no disputing about Tastes," is a maxim based upon the perverseness of human nature, and not upon the equivocal character of things which it is the proper office of taste to judge and to understand. Mr. Burke has observed that the "groundwork of taste is in all men alike, and differs only in degree." Of what other quality in man could not the same thing be said?

Taste is clearly enough an acquirement for which some men have greater aptitude than others, as well as better opportunities; and hence the degree in which it is possessed or neglected. As this is not an essay upon Taste, but merely an exordium preparatory to the investigation of the subject of Beauty, we may pass many collateral considerations naturally connected with it. Judgment, which is so often confounded with taste, may be considered as a faculty allied with *knowledge*; while taste is distinguished from judgment by being allied to *feeling*.

It is clear that Beauty is the legitimate object of Taste; and also that its perception and enjoyment are the peculiar prerogatives of the human creature.

There is a consideration connected with Beauty which appears to me to have been passed over unnoticed by all who have investigated the subject; and as it is one of the very highest importance, I am the more surprised that it should have excited no interest or attention. No arguments are necessary to prove that the Creator has exhibited in all his works a purpose and an end; yet we may ask ourselves, why was the perception of beauty given to the human creature only? It is clear that the perception of Beauty is not necessary to man as a mere animal; it is as a rational and intelligent creature that he has been admitted to so high a privilege as the enjoyment of beauty. The subject is not of a nature to investigate very closely, but slight reflection will show us that *Brutes* preserve their instinct uninfluenced by *Beauty*, or anything analogous to it that we can comprehend; they appear to have nothing like a choice in the connections they form, nor anything like attachment to each other when passion has subsided! As man alone is capable of feeling the force of beauty, it is very natural to suppose it was given to him for some good and important purpose, and that it is thence necessary to him as a sentient being, and not as a mere animal: thus showing that the perception of Beauty is given to man in his rational and intellectual capacity; a fact which points out clearly the importance of the subject.

To pursue this subject through all the labyrinths, subtleties, and difficulties with which it is beset would be a never-ending task, and one attended with so much labour as to leave us wearied and incapacitated for the enjoyment and comprehension of that portion of it which is pleasant, simple, and easy.

In order clearly to define and prove in what way VARIETY pleases, and how that perception or sensation as it is called in this theory which we designate Beauty is produced by it, would demand that we should enter scientifically and metaphysically into the nature of plea-

sure itself, show its cause, and how, and why, and where it differs from pain. It might even be necessary to examine the structure and mode of operation of the instruments themselves — the organs by which we are made conscious of the presence of agreeable or painful sensations. We might puzzle ourselves in conjecturing by what means ideas pass from the object to the brain, and how far matter is concerned; and at last make it a question whether all we perceive is anything more than mere *spirit* and *idea*. Here we are at once entangled in the web of the *sophists*, with *Pyrrho* of old, *Des Cartes*, *Malebranche*, *Bishop Berkeley*, and even *Locke*, who contends that “personal identity consists in consciousness.”

It is taken for granted that every inquirer upon whom there is any chance of making an impression believes in his own identity as well as his own existence without the necessity of convincing himself by the logical process of one of these deep reasons. *Cogito, ergo sum!* And also that every one who feels pleasure or pain, and knows the object which occasions such feelings, may be justified in connecting the cause and the consequence, even though he does clearly understand the *modus operandi* of the impression he receives.

A sufficient clue to the cause of pleasure as a mere affair of sense is obtained by reflecting upon its opposite — the cause of pain. We find that one sole state of perception long continued becomes wearisome, and after a time painful. And here it must be remarked, that there is evidently a great difference in the nature and character of the five senses in this respect; in the consideration of which it will appear, that *that* most important to man (the eye) has a restless activity about it, and an insatiate craving which demands a continual supply of objects, while the rest can remain quiescent for a considerable period without feeling much inconvenience. But it is nevertheless a fact which requires no argument, that *sameness*, monotony, or one continuous state of being or perception, soon tires, and demands a change, or an interruption of such state, by way of relief. This is agreeable with our every-day experience, with the structure of our frames and the constitution of our minds. Of course I speak of our *waking* condition; and in order to avoid ambiguity as much as possible, I could wish the inquirer to adopt my phraseology, and to call this condition a state of perception, so as to distinguish it from sleep, reverie, or any other in which objects of the senses become unheeded. There will be no difficulty in comprehending how the activity of a sense seeks its objects, and how, not finding them, becomes dissatisfied.

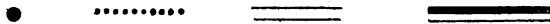
It follows as a matter of necessity that when the sense has been for some time in one state of perception, and given to one object, that a change in the object will be the cause of a change in the state of perception, and that this change will be the cause of pleasure.\* Indeed

\* The inquirer is requested to consider that no changes are meant but those that range on the pleasing side of our sensations; otherwise it may be said that *pain* may cause a change in the state of perception, and is incapable of giving pleasure.

the fact is so evident that it appears scarcely necessary to devote so many words to the proof of it. It is clear then that *pleasure arises from varying the state of perception*; and with this we may satisfy ourselves without going farther into the subtleties of the question.

Proceeding from this point we at once get a view of the whole system before us, and see obscurely in the distance that mighty object whose details furnish authority and proof for every instance we can bring forward of its manifold effects, and whose aggregate is in itself an illustration of the sublime problem we attempt to solve. All who have made long sea-voyages have travelled the sandy and monotonous plains of the East, the *pampas* of South America, or the *steppes* of Russia, have described the pain occasioned by the absence of objects. A single bird making its appearance at sea has become an object of interest, and has been watched as long as it could be seen; the solitary *condor* sailing in the monotonous desert has been hailed with shouts of delight; any object breaking in upon the wearied *state of perception*, however insignificant, has obtained a consequence which, under ordinary circumstances, does not belong to it: the reason of this is evident.

If we figure to ourselves the total erasure of every object from our sight, we shall then have a state which is directly opposed to that in which we exist, which we may call a state of plenitude, and the imaginary one a state of emptiness or nothingness. If we contemplate such a state and allow our imagination to lead us, we shall find it perfectly insupportable. Let us fancy the creation one wide and extended blank, and we shall soon be able to feel that the introduction of one single *dot* or speck into this dreary waste of vision would be attended with a *degree* of pleasure; that a slight variety, a continuation of dots, or a single line succeeding this, would yield an additional degree of pleasure; that two lines would give more pleasure than one; and that varying these, making one *strong* and the other *weak*, would be still more agreeable to the eye. For example, take this series: the last will give you more pleasure than the first.



These objects are so insignificant in themselves that the pleasure they afford to the eye is the smallest, perhaps, it is possible to conceive; but as far as they please, it is evident they do so by their own physical properties, and *not* by aid of any *associations* they bring with them. And here the inquirer will please to observe, that it is impossible to proceed far with these forms, because, by a combination of lines, the likeness of some object or other will be suggested or produced, and thus the associate power of the mind will be allowed to step in when it is desired to confine the effect entirely to the eye!

If we fancy these *specks* capable of a change of colour, at each change a degree of pleasure will be produced, and without the aid of mental associations.

If we turn to the consideration of another sense, far less fastidious and insatiate than the eye, we shall find similar results from similar causes.

I remember once having a forcible illustration of this. I had been engaged in sketching for about two hours in York cathedral, and had chosen a time when it was not open to the public. The silence and solitude of this venerable retreat was at first delightful; but at the end of the time I mention, although I was fully occupied, I became sensible that my ear missed its usual excitement, and seemed to require some exercise of its proper function. The silence around me appeared to become as it were *audible*; but in the midst of this I heard some movement, as if some one had entered; and presently one of the low tones of the *diapason* of the fine organ broke in upon the silence that had so long remained undisturbed. It was the period of the festival; and some one was employed in tuning the organ. I thought I never experienced any sensation so pleasant as when the fine mellow tone of this pipe first reached my ear; and then the *octave* followed, and then the full chord: nothing was ever so delicious. The process of *tuning* proceeded; and in half an hour that which had been so pleasant at first forced me to make my retreat.

As has been said in every object possessed of Beauty, there must be the capability — the materials of variety or change; and exactly in proportion as any object is possessed of them, so will be the degree or completeness of its Beauty. In the mode by which the parts and particulars which constitute these materials are made to act, and fall into that arrangement which is creative of the greatest degree of Beauty, variety appears to be the principle adopted by nature and carried out in every possible way. When such an arrangement of parts and particulars has taken place in the features of the face, we call it beauty; when such arrangement is manifested in the relations of the head, body, and limbs, we call it *proportion*: in both cases it is but a disposition of materials upon an applied principle of variety.

Man, as has been said, is the most varied form in nature; so that if you take the materials of variety, and work them up upon the principles of variety, the composition you create is the human creature! Variety, therefore, is the grand principle of his being: without it he exists not; with it and by it comes his very being. The very order and disposition of his structure depends upon it: first, his erect position appears an indispensable condition of the grand principle of variety; and next, the arrangement of the parts of which he is made up — the shape and position of his head, body, and limbs. Even his purposes appear to be indicated and rendered inevitable by the nature of his structure; for if they be supposed other than what they are, his structure must have been different, and that which it could not have been, and at the same time have been the highest, most complicated, and varied.

Upon the principle of variety the head of the human creature supposes and gives the neck with its characteristic form, the breast and



shoulders, abdomen, limbs, and extremities, each with their peculiar characters. Man is a creature necessarily of the form in which he is found: to give him another would impose upon him another nature and other attributes. If to think, he must possess the brain; if to move, he must have the means of locomotion he has: you cannot arbitrarily change the position of the parts in which his several functions are lodged, or you deprive him of his form and character: he is no longer a man but a monster; and instead of having increased the variety of his structure, you will have reduced it. It appears almost unnecessary to say this; but certain ingenious persons to whom this hypothesis has been mentioned have fancied that a creature might be constructed with all the parts which characterise the human creature changed, reversed, and still possess an equal degree of *variety*. This I suspect is an error into which it will be easy to fall; because I have often observed, when speaking of variety as a cause of beauty, a notion will arise that there may be *too much* variety. This, of course, is a misconception of the thing intended, and an anomaly: too much variety is not variety but sameness.

If we could trace clearly the principle from the lowest order of creation, where it is clearly defined and easily understood, as in the elements of form, which are incapable of any modification, and in certain examples of creatures which will be given hereafter, we should find at each advance upwards in the scale of creation an increase of variety until it gained its utmost amplitude in man; just as we find in the upward scale of living entities a more complicated and complete organisation, with systems of nerves and muscles superadded, each attended with an extra quantity of intelligence and capability. Supposing this could be done, all would be found inferior to man in variety; and when you come to him, whatever could be done to elevate him in form would be the result, as it has been in the creation of the *beau idéal*, of increasing the VARIETY, and thus the BEAUTY, of his structure.

But, perhaps, we are proceeding too far into the depths of the subject without properly preparing the way. We will return and take up the inquiry at a point beset with fewer difficulties.

As has been said, the conformation of the human creature is an illustration of the principle of variety applied according to certain laws, which it is our business to explain. Perhaps the best method of showing in a clear and simple way what is intended would be to take the human head and face, and to compare their parts and particulars, or, in other words, their *materials of variety*, with those of subordinate creatures, and to consider these parts and particulars as the means by which the sensation or the idea of Beauty, if the reader likes that phrase better, is conveyed to the mind, or produced, as well as expression and character.

To look for the beauty or expression of man in any of the lower order of creatures would be the same as to expect the changes which can be rung upon *twelve bells* to be rung upon *three*. There are not the

materials necessary for such a number of changes and such a combination.

No other form would contrast and create such a variety with the neck and shoulders as the spherical form chosen by nature for the head of the human creature, while the parts of which this noble element of beauty is formed are infinitely more numerous and diversified than are to be found in the most completely organised animal.

First, the human face, as a composition, is perfect as a whole, which is not the case with that of any animal, as will be hereafter explained; and again, it possesses a number of distinct features, which are peculiar to it. For instance, its character of fleshiness is distinct from the portion covered with hair; from which circumstance all its minute changes become visible. First, the broad tablet of forehead, upon which the eyebrows, a feature *peculiar* to man, are *marked* and *seen*; the eyes of a form far more varied than those of animals, although, as an optical instrument, the eyes of all creatures are necessarily similar, having a similar purpose with the power of changing their aspect by the lifting, lowering, and contracting of the brows; the nose, a feature peculiar to man, no other animal having a *distinct* nose; the ruddy part of the lips, also peculiar to man both in form and colour; the chin, a distinct and peculiar feature, one of which no other animal is possessed. There are many others; but these are sufficient for the purpose of showing that man is infinitely better furnished with the means of beauty and expression than the lower order of creatures.

In the conformation of his body and limbs he is full as much their superior: the parts and particulars of which he is made up are so numerous and diversified, that an infinite number of changes can take place in their relation to each other, and which, in the inferior creatures, is impossible.

All those interesting and various changes which take place in the human creature from infancy to age are only modifications of the relation of parts and particulars one to the other, and are, so to express it, the result of an amplitude of materials; whilst, in animals, few or none of these changes can take place from a deficiency of materials. It is thus that infancy, childhood, youth, manhood, maturity, and age are all more strongly marked in man than in any other creature. The higher order of animals are strongly characterised by different conditions of their being; but, as we descend lower in the scale, these become less and less, and, in the lowest, are not to be found. A Fish, for instance, whose form is little more than two curved lines meeting at the head and the tail, is, as a matter of necessity, incapable of variety or change; and in consequence the young and the old have no peculiar characteristics which distinguish them. Others, such as Birds, have one change only; and others, again, have more than one: but the most perfectly organised and formed are, in this respect, infinitely below the human creature.

As regards expression, it will be seen, as a general fact, that there is a far greater sameness among the individuals of any class of animals than in the human race, and that this sameness becomes more and more as you descend in the scale of existence. The faces of reptiles, of fishes, of birds, and the lower order of quadrupeds, are utterly incapable of expression; even the highest have a very limited power of expression, more limited than is generally supposed, since the characteristics of fear, anger, pleasure, pain, are eked out by the assistance of other than the actual features or proper instruments of expression, to wit, the movements of *ears* and *tail*, to which a kind of conventional meaning is attached.

A person who has never thought of the subject at all is puzzled to know how the face of a fish, for instance, becomes incapable of expressing pleasure or pain: but he will see, after a moment's thought, that these passions are partly manifested by the eyebrows and the lips, and that a fish has neither of these features; and, as regards others which it may have, they are incapable of change. He then sees, for the first time, that the expression he looks for depends upon the possession of *materials*, and that the creature in question is devoid of these. If he goes on higher in the scale — only that here the investigation becomes more difficult — he will find that all creatures are defective in some particular or other.

If the expression under consideration depend upon a change of colour in the face, no animal is capable of this, because he cannot exhibit such a change; if it depend upon some movement of the eyebrows, he is incapable of that for the same reason; if upon the curling or turning out of the ruddy part of the lips, it is impossible to an animal; and if upon something dependant on a distinct nose or chin, it is the same. All the charms, varieties, and degrees of happiness which the heart of man manifests in the open laugh or the expressive smile are all denied and impossible to animals, from a deficiency of the necessary means or materials.

It is the necessity of providing the requisite materials which compel Artists to give, in the representation of Satan, a *human*, and a fine character of head. The features of a beast of prey might be sufficient for the expression of ferocity or an inferior degree of malignity; but for deep hatred, long-nursed vengeance, and that intellectuality necessary for contriving the means of putting such passions *effectively* into operation, it is indispensable to give the facial characteristics of humanity. The vulgar image, as well as idea, of the devil — a monster with horns and a tail, and the face and head of a brute, are things only to laugh at, not to fear, because there is the manifestation of the absence of the intellect necessary to contrive and to compass evil. It is thus we approach the elucidation of the inquiry before us; and although we may not be able to trace and define every particular of the wondrous machinery by which the mighty range of human passion, affections, purposes, wishes, and so on, are manifested, we become

certain that he is in possession of them from the results, and from what is demanded for their display upon a small scale.

The deduction which is so natural and conclusive from the view we have here taken of expression, comes with the same force from a similar consideration of Beauty: the materials must be there, or no beauty can exist.

If we take a mere block, devoid of parts, particulars, materials, features, or, to speak more directly, of eyes, nose, and mouth, we shall not look for beauty, nor, perhaps, instantly discern the reason we do not find it; but it will soon appear that these items are necessary to make up, in some way or other, by their agency, what is required. They must be had, and, when obtained, must be placed in this block—in the area of the face—in some kind of order and relation to each other. Thrown in at random, they will not form the varied figure necessary, which may be proved by adopting an arrangement upon a plain and simple principle of variety, or by mere measurement. This seen and proved leads naturally to the conviction that, by pursuing the inquiry and by closely studying the subject, a mode might be found out by which these several parts may be disposed of in a manner the most highly varied, and, being resorted to, it is at once seen and felt that beauty is the consequence.

These *places* of the features found will, as a matter of course, in some degree determine the character of the features themselves; that is to say, they must be confined to certain dimensions, so as not to occupy more space than can be allowed them. If broad masses, such as those of the forehead and the cheeks, are necessary upon a principle of variety, they must be preserved and not encroached upon. If prominences and hollows are essential upon the same principle, it will soon be seen that there is a kind of natural limit to these which points to a *principle* which is not yet fully defined, but sufficiently hinted at to indicate that there is one. For example, if the mass which constitutes the nose is upon a principle of contrast or variety to be less than those of the forehead and cheeks, it must not equal them in extent. It must be smaller, but how much? it may be too small; and between one and the other lies the exact quantity demanded. It is this exact quantity that will even furnish a study for art, and a subject of inquiry; and although no principle may ever be found which will determine the point, the existence of a law which *should* guide, is as clearly indicated as if it were.

But there are many other processes by which this law or principle of beauty or variety may be approached. The *marking*, as artists call it, which is attendant upon the characteristics of the eyes, nose, and mouth, must submit to a principle: eyes too deeply sunk, nose too prominent, with nostrils too large, mouth too large, too prominent, or too much sunken, will each destroy the balance that ought to exist between them; that is to say, *ought* upon a principle of variety, which, when adhered to, produces beauty, when violated, ugliness. If it be necessary, as is assumed, that the area of the face should be divided

by the features spoken of, the division is perfect or imperfect in proportion as these features are perfect. If it be found that the divisions of the face are most varied,—a fact readily proved when the forehead bears a certain relation to the nose, the nose to the lips, and the lips to the chin, and so on,—the violation of any of these relations is found always to lessen and to destroy beauty.

In the same way, if the volume of the head be too small or too large for that of the chest, the length and breadth of the body and limbs, the variety in these masses is injured, and, with it, the beauty, or, as we call it more commonly when applied to the figure instead of the face, the *proportion*, is spoiled.

It is an observation which has often been made, that an ugly face may be as varied as a beautiful one. This is denied, and can be readily proved, nor is it possible to reverse the order of the parts.

Uniformity has been made a constituent of beauty; but, however strange it may appear in words, uniformity is but an ingredient of variety. If, for example, you design a series of parts which may be represented by dots, and so dispose of these either in a single line or any other figure, that the distances between each shall be as varied as any series can be—when this is done, there is a mode by which an additional feature of variety may be introduced, and this is by making some *two of these divisions equal*, all the rest being unequal. For example, take a line of *dots*, thus:

. . . . . \* \* \* . . .

or according to any other arrangement, the uniformity of a portion of the series creates an increase of variety.

Whether we speak of uniformity as an ingredient of variety, or call it a principle for the sake of using the term more freely, will not matter as long as we clearly see what it is and how employed.

In the structure of the human figure, the two principles (as we will call them) are employed with sublime ingenuity by the hand of the Creator. A human figure, standing upright and straight before us, and presenting its full front, exhibits, in a striking way, the *uniform* principle: the outline which runs from head to foot on the one side is exactly matched by that on the other. Viewing the same figure *side-ways*, it presents an exemplification of the *varied* principle entirely, so that if the figure and the eye of the spectator are *fixed*, the uniform principle is not seen at all. The curves of which it is composed fall into each other in a peculiar way: thus, for example (.), whilst, in the uniform view they are opposed to each other like a parenthesis, thus: ( ). This principle is adhered to through every part of the figure from head to foot; *concave* parts never oppose *concave* parts, nor *convex* parts their fellows.

Now the sublime ingenuity of this contrivance for the purpose of creating a varied influence upon the eye, is as splendid an instance of the incalculable resources of the Creator as any that can be found in

the whole range of his marvellous works, and, as such, it is a misfortune that so beautiful and inspiring a fact should be almost unknown. By this splendid contrivance, no movement, however trifling, can take place in the figure without exhibiting parts which belong to both the uniform and the varied principles. Perhaps what we call *grace*, which is clearly enough *prolonged action* and *something super-added*, is nothing more than those movements in which the two principles are strikingly manifested and displayed.

That the simultaneous display of these add to the beauty of such objects as possess them, is certain, since Art, which strives to represent the beautiful, always chooses to give the aspect in which these are seen. A profile head, if painted, is always accompanied with such a view of the bust as shows the correspondence of the shoulders, by which the uniform principle is manifest. There is a curious consideration connected with our possessing *two eyes* which is worth noticing. Mr. Payne Knight or Mr. Burke (I forget which) remarks, that he sees no reason whatever why *one eye* would not have served us as well as a couple. But there is a very excellent reason: by means of two eyes we are instantly made better acquainted with the forms of things than we could be without. By the help of two eyes we look *round* things, as it were; and, as regards the human creature, and others which combine the two principles spoken of, we see more beauty, or, to use more correct language, we are more impressed with the beauty of objects than as if we saw them with one. A book held steadily in the hand with its back towards you, and looked at with *one eye* only, presents the *mere back*, and nothing more; but, if looked at with both eyes, the sides, or the covers, are inevitably seen. Nature, after creating Beauty, gave man two eyes that he might feel the full effect of what had been accomplished. Painters are in the habit of looking at objects with one eye closed: this is to avoid the confusion of seeing with two; but, in their representation of objects, as if to atone for a restriction put upon their Art, they are in the habit of choosing those views of objects which result from the use of two eyes.\*

Adopting the necessity of the uniform and the varied principles as constituents of beauty, we readily see why a departure from or defects in either are productive of ugliness. If, for example, the two hemispheres of the face *should* correspond, a disparity in them is an obstacle to beauty. This is, in reality, a very common cause of ugliness, and which is strikingly manifested when the eyes do not correspond, as in the case of a *squint*.

The inquirer, it is hoped, from what has been said, sees clearly what is *meant* by the materials of change, by variety, and by beauty, as a result of these in the human creature.

As regards the beauty of the creation at large it is the same; it is the result of a combination of materials worked up and arranged upon

\* It is a fact worthy of remark that the foliage of trees appears more complicated and confused when seen with one eye than with two: why is it so?

a principle of variety. Some of these materials may be named, or the properties of them assumed as the names of the materials themselves; for instance, the opaque, the transparent, the rough, the smooth, the dull, the shining, the ponderous, the light, the fixed, the flowing, the unyielding, the flexible, the straight, the undulating. These and many others are qualities which are distinct from form and colour, but still those by which objects are characterized.

Earth, sky, and water, are three grand elements of variety or beauty which delight us by the contrariety of their qualities, and form a splendid and comprehensive basis upon which an endless variety of beauties rest. The vacuity of air, the substantiality of earth, and the mocking, mirror-like character of water, are all features of the most effective kind; the horizontality of water is in itself a beautiful circumstance in a scheme for the creation of variety, while the firm, unchanging, and the endless variety of shapes of plains, rocks, and mountains contrasted with the light, void, free space and transparent character of the sky, with all its fantastic changes, are admirably adapted to the same end. The beauty of a landscape consists in the variety of its parts; monotony in its forms and colours destroys it, or equality of masses or of detail. Dividing the area of the picture in two equal parts, either by the horizon or any object, is avoided by artists, as is everything that creates sameness. There must be variety in form, variety in colour, and variety in the parts upon which the effect depends. Every expedient of variety in the choice of objects is resorted to — figure, building, trees, rocks, earth, water, clouds; and each are employed and arranged upon a principle of variety, that is to say, so to contrast with each other that their several characteristics shall be felt.

Whether it is in the representation of the noblest objects of the creation or in the meanest — in depicting man, or in *graining* the panel of a door — it is the same: it is in VARIETY that Nature keeps Art at a distance!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: WITH A REPLY BY THE  
AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS," ETC.

SIR,

It is not at all necessary, as you suppose, that I should be enabled to prove the sea to have been as opaque as the earth, in order to maintain the correctness of my assertion, "that the horizontal lines" (as the author of "Modern Painters," &c. terms them), cast by clouds upon the sea, are really and truly *shadows* — shadows *more* definite and "distinct" than those cast by clouds on a grass field.

What is signified by the word shadow? — It denotes a mere negation, viz. an absence or privation of light, resulting from an interception of rays proceeding from some illuminating body.

My "assertion" relates to an instance of light interrupted and prevented from falling upon the surface of the sea (the "*clear*" and transparent sea), by the intervention of a cloud. The results of this interception of light the

Graduate describes as "horizontal lines cast by clouds upon the sea." They however answer to his description only when seen perspectively foreshortened: viewed from an eminence their forms are of course various and irregular, according to the shapes of the clouds, by whose boundaries the light passes, or (in common parlance) by which the "shadows" are "projected." If you ask me how it comes to pass that these dark patches or horizontal lines (which I call shadows, because, amongst other reasons, I frequently also see their reflections *simultaneously*) are "as distinct" on the sea as they are on a grass field, I answer that *it is the result of contrast*, just as a patch of neutral tint on a sheet of white paper is more "distinct" than a similar patch on a sheet of grey paper. The grass field is greyed and "lowered" by the darks of the interstices "stippled" or intermixed with the lights upon the blades of grass. The white paper is on the other hand but an imperfect and feeble exemplification of the brilliancy of light reflected from the polished surface of the sea. It cannot be at all surprising that shadows on the "clear" sea are as distinct (they are frequently far more distinct) as they are on a grass field, notwithstanding the somewhat counteracting effect of that light which is subdued by transmission beneath the surface. Bouguer found by experiments, from which De Humboldt draws some interesting conclusions of a practical nature, that light after a passage through water of 180 feet is *weakened 1478 times*. — Your observation that "the Graduate might have gone farther," and have said that "clear water is insusceptible of light as well as shadow," is, I can assure you, by no means *puzzling*. — Whatever else it may be, will perhaps be more apparent if you will oblige me by carrying out your own proposition, by means of what I consider a fair and straightforward piece of experimental "philosophy." Place a deep tub (the larger and deeper the better) in the open air, where the sun can shine upon it; fill it with water — clear water — double distilled if you like; take an opaque screen, it need not be very opaque, I shall be satisfied if it be capable of intercepting only as much light as a cloud. Cut an aperture in it, which may be covered by hanging a piece of brown paper over it; place the screen so as to intercept the light falling upon the tub. I suppose I may venture to "assert" that the tub and its contents are now "*in shadow*."

Remove the cover from the aperture in the screen that a patch of light may pass through it so as to fall upon the surface of the water, and then tell me that "clear water is insusceptible of light as well as shadow," if you please.

It appears from your very beautiful description of the Grotto of Capri that there are two apertures, one by which light is admitted directly from the atmosphere upon the surface of the water, but only to a short distance from the entrance. That is *reflected* light. The other aperture, being sub-aqueous, admits light only through the great body of water which fills the cavern. This is "*transmitted* light." Now taking into consideration the vast difference of intensity between these two modifications of light, it is no wonder that the reflected light at the entrance shines, as you describe it, "like a star," for a shadow, however weakened, whether by means of light transmitted, or of light reflected, is a shadow still, and the *surface* of the water in the Grotto of Capri is really and truly *in shadow*, resulting from interception of light produced by the roof of the cavern intervening between the sun and the water. Cut a hole in the roof of the cave, and you will have a second "star" and another version of the experiment of the tub and screen.



As I must not now attempt to occupy either your time or the pages of your Journal with an *analysis* of your explanation of the phenomena of the Grotto of Capri, which you inform us are "*the results*" of *shadow falling upon objects which will receive it, and upon objects which will not*," I will for the present *content* myself with just *suggesting*, for your consideration, the *possibility* of their being the result of a simple truth, first propounded I believe by that tolerably accurate "observer" Sir Isaac Newton, viz. that uniform pellucid substances (such as water) *reflect light only from their surfaces*.

Sir, yours, &c.

J. H. MAW.

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REPLY.

SIR,

THE phenomena of light and shade, rendered to the eye by the surface or substance of water, are so intricate and so multitudinous, that had I wished fully to investigate, or even fully to state them, a volume instead of a page would have been required for the task. In the paragraphs which I devoted to the subject I expressed, as briefly as possible, the laws which are of most general application—with which artists are indeed so universally familiar, that I conceived it altogether unnecessary to prove or support them: but since I have expressed them in as few words as possible, I cannot afford to have any of those words missed or disregarded; and therefore when I say that on *clear* water, *near* the eye, there is no shadow, I must not be understood to mean that on *muddy* water, *far* from the eye, there is no shadow. As, however, your correspondent appears to deny my position in toto, and as many persons, on their first glance at the subject, might be inclined to do the same, you will perhaps excuse me for occupying a page or two with a more explicit statement, both of facts and principles, than my limits admitted in the "Modern Painters."

First, for the experimental proof of my assertion that "on clear water, near the eye, there is no shadow." Your correspondent's trial with the tub is somewhat cumbrous and inconvenient; a far more simple experiment will settle the matter. Fill a tumbler with water; throw into it a narrow strip of white paper; put the tumbler into sunshine; dip your finger into the water between the paper and the sun, so as to throw a shadow across the paper and on the water. The shadow will of course be distinct on the paper, but on the water absolutely and totally invisible.

This simple trial of the fact, and your explanation of the principle, given in your ninth Number, are sufficient proof and explanation of my assertion; and if your correspondent requires authority as well as ocular demonstration he has only to ask Stanfield or Copley Fielding, or any other good painter of sea: the latter, indeed, was the person who first pointed out the fact to me when a boy. What then, it remains to be determined, are those lights and shades on the sea, which for the sake of clearness, and because they appear such to the ordinary observer, I have spoken of as "horizontal lines," and which have every appearance of being cast by the clouds like real

shadows? I imagined that I had been sufficiently explicit on this subject, both at pages 330 and 363: but your correspondent appears to have confused himself by inaccurately receiving the term *shadow* as if it meant darkness of any kind; whereas my second sentence — "every *darkness* on water is reflection, not shadow," — might have shown him that I used it in its particular sense, as meaning the absence of *positive* light on a visible surface. Thus, in endeavouring to support his assertion, that the shadows on the sea are as distinct as on a grass field, he says that they are so by contrast with the "light *reflected* from its polished surface;" thus showing at once that he has been speaking and thinking all along, not of shadow, but of the absence of reflected light — an absence which is no more shadow than the absence of the image of a piece of white paper in a mirror is shadow on the mirror.

The question, therefore, is one of terms rather than of things; and before proceeding it will be necessary for me to make your correspondent understand thoroughly what is meant by the term shadow as opposed to that of reflection.

Let us stand on the sea-shore on a cloudless night, with a full moon over the sea, and a swell on the water. Of course a long line of splendour will be seen on the waves under the moon, reaching from the horizon to our very feet. But are those waves between the moon and us *actually* more illuminated than any other part of the sea? Not one whit. The whole surface of the sea is under the same full light, but the waves between the moon and us are the only ones which are in a position to reflect that light to our eyes. The sea on both sides of that path of light is in perfect darkness, almost black. But is it so from shadow? Not so, — for there is nothing to intercept the moonlight from it: it is so from position, because it cannot reflect any of the rays which fall on it to our eyes, but reflects instead the dark vault of the night sky. Both the darkness and the light on it, therefore — and they are as violently contrasted as may well be — are nothing but reflections, the whole surface of the water being under one blaze of moonlight, entirely unshaded by any intervening object whatsoever.

Now, then, we can understand the cause of the *chiaro-scuro* of the sea by daylight with lateral sun. Where the sunlight reaches the water, every ripple, wave, or swell reflects to the eye from some of its planes either the image of the sun or some portion of the neighbouring bright sky. Where the cloud interposes between the sun and sea, all these luminous reflections are prevented, and the raised planes of the waves reflect only the dark under-surface of the cloud; and hence, by the multiplication of the images, spaces of light and shade are produced, which lie on the sea precisely in the position of real or positive lights and shadows — corresponding to the outlines of the clouds — laterally cast, and therefore seen in addition to, and at the same time with, the ordinary or direct reflection, vigorously contrasted, the lights being often a blaze of gold, and the shades a dark leaden grey; and yet, I repeat, they are no more real lights, or real shadows, on the sea, than the image of a black coat is a shadow on a mirror, or the image of white paper a light upon it.

Are there then *no* shadows whatsoever upon the sea. Not so. My assertion is simply that there are none on clear water near the eye. I shall briefly state a few of the circumstances which give rise to real shadow in distant effect.

I. Any admixture of opaque colouring matter, as of mud, chalk, or powdered granite, renders water capable of distinct shadow, which is cast

on the earthy and solid particles suspended in the liquid. None of the seas on our south-eastern coast are so clear as to be absolutely incapable of shade; and the faint tint, though scarcely perceptible to a near observer\*, is sufficiently manifest when seen in large extent from a distance, especially when contrasted, as your correspondent says, with reflected lights. This was one reason for my introducing the words — "near the eye."

There is, however, a peculiarity in the appearances of such shadows which requires especial notice. It is not merely the transparency of water, but its polished surface, and consequent reflective power, which render it incapable of shadow. A perfectly opaque body, if its power of reflection be perfect, receives no shadow (this I shall presently prove); and therefore, in any lustrous body, the incapability of shadow is in proportion to the power of reflection. Now the power of reflection in water varies with the angle of the impinging ray, being of course greatest when that angle is least: and thus, when we look along the water at a low angle, its power of reflection maintains its incapability of shadow to a considerable extent, in spite of its containing suspended opaque matter; whereas, when we look *down* upon water from a height, as we then receive from it only rays which have fallen on it at a large angle, a great number of those rays are unreflected from the surface, but penetrate beneath the surface, and are then reflected † from the suspended opaque matter: thus rendering shadows clearly visible which, at a small angle, would have been altogether unperceived.

II. But it is not merely the presence of opaque matter which renders shadows visible on the sea seen from a height. The eye, when elevated above the water, receives rays reflected from the bottom, of which, when *near* the water, it is insensible. I have seen the bottom at seven fathoms, so that I could count its pebbles, from the cliffs of the Cornish coast; and the broad effect of the light and shade of the bottom is discernible at enormous depths. In fact, it is difficult to say at what depth the rays returned from the bottom become absolutely ineffective — perhaps not until we get fairly out into blue water. Hence, with a white or sandy shore, shadows forcible enough to afford conspicuous variety of colour may be seen from a height of two or three hundred feet.

\* Of course, if water be perfectly foul, like that of the Rhine or Arve, it receives a shadow nearly as well as mud. Yet the succeeding observations on its reflective power are applicable to it, even in this state.

† It must always be remembered that there are two kinds of reflection, — one from polished bodies, giving back rays of light unaltered; the other from unpolished bodies, giving back rays of light altered. By the one reflection we see the images of other objects on the surface of the reflecting object; by the other we are made aware of the nature of that surface itself. The difference between these two kinds of reflection has not been well worked out by writers on optics: but the great distinction between them is, that the rough body reflects most rays when the angle at which the rays impinge is largest, and the polished body when the angle is smallest. It is the reflection from polished bodies exclusively which I usually indicate by the term; and that from rough bodies I commonly distinguish as "positive light:" but as I have here used the term in its general sense, the explanation of the distinction becomes necessary. All light and shade on matter is caused by reflection of some kind: and the distinction made throughout this paper, between reflected and positive light, and between *real* and pseudo shade, is nothing more than the distinction between two kinds of reflection.

I believe some of Bouguer's experiments have been rendered inaccurate, — not in their general result, nor in *ratio* of quantities, but in the quantities themselves, — by the difficulty of distinguishing between the two kinds of reflected rays.

III. The actual colour of the sea itself is an important cause of shadow in distant effect. Of the ultimate causes of local colour in water I am not ashamed to confess my total ignorance, for I believe Sir David Brewster himself has not elucidated them. Every river in Switzerland has a different hue. The lake of Geneva, commonly blue, appears, under a fresh breeze, striped with blue and bright red; and the hues of coast-sea are as various as those of a dolphin: but, whatever be the cause of their variety, their intensity is, of course, dependent on the presence of sun-light. The sea under shade is commonly of a cold grey hue; in sun-light it is susceptible of vivid and exquisite colouring: and thus the forms of clouds are traced on its surface, not by light and shade, but by variation of *colour*—by greys opposed to greens, blues to rose-tints, &c. All such phenomena are chiefly visible from a height and a distance; and thus furnished me with additional reasons for introducing the words—"near the eye."

IV. Local colour is, however, the cause of one beautiful kind of *chiaroscuro*, visible when we are close to the water—shadows cast, not *on* the waves, but through them, as through misty air. When a wave is raised so as to let the sun-light through a portion of its body, the contrast of the transparent chrysoprase green of the illuminated parts with the darkness of the shadowed is exquisitely beautiful.

Hitherto, however, I have been speaking chiefly of the *transparency* of water as the source of its incapability of shadow. I have still to demonstrate the effect of its polished surface.

Let your correspondent pour an ounce or two of quicksilver into a flat white saucer, and, throwing a strip of white paper into the middle of the mercury, as before into the water, interpose an upright bit of stick between it and the sun: he will then have the pleasure of seeing the shadow of the stick sharply defined on the paper and the edge of the saucer, while on the intermediate portion of mercury it will be totally invisible.\* Mercury is a perfectly opaque body, and its incapability of shadow is entirely owing to the perfection of its polished surface. Thus, then, whether water be considered as transparent or reflective, (and according to its position it is one or the other, or partially both—for in the exact degree that it is the one it is *not* the other,) it is equally incapable of shadow. But as on distant water, so also on near water, when broken, pseudo shadows take place, which are in reality nothing more than the aggregates of reflections. In the illuminated space of the wave, from every plane turned towards the sun there flashes an image of the sun; in the *un*-illuminated space there is seen on every such plane only the dark image of the interposed body. Every wreath of the foam, every jet of the spray, reflects in the sun-light a thousand diminished suns, and refracts their rays into a thousand colours; while in the shadowed parts the same broken parts of the wave appear only in dead, cold white; and thus pseudo shadows are caused, occupying the position of real shadows, defined in portions of their edge with equal sharpness: and yet, I repeat, they are no more real shadows than the image of a piece of black cloth is a shadow on a mirror.

But your correspondent will say, "What does it matter to me or to the artist, whether they *are* shadows or not? They are darkness, and they supply the place of shadows, and that is all I contend for." Not so. They do *not* supply the place of shadows; they are divided from them by this broad distinction, that while shadow causes uniform deepening of the

\* The mercury must of course be perfectly clean.

ground-tint in the objects which it affects, these pseudo shadows are merely portions of that ground-tint itself undeeptened, but cut out and rendered conspicuous by flashes of light irregularly disposed around it. The ground-tint both of shadowed and illumined parts is precisely the same—a pure pale grey, catching as it moves the hues of the sky and clouds; but on this, in the illumined spaces, there fall touches and flashes of intense reflected light, which are absent in the shadow. If, for the sake of illustration, we consider the wave as hung with a certain quantity of lamps, irregularly disposed, the shape and extent of a shadow on that wave will be marked by the lamps being all put out within its influence, while the tint of the water itself is entirely unaffected by it.

The works of Stanfield will supply your correspondent with perfect and admirable illustrations of this principle. His water-tint is equally clear and luminous whether in sunshine or shade; but the whole lustre of the illumined parts is attained by bright isolated touches of reflected light.

The works of Turner will supply us with still more striking examples, especially in cases where slanting sunbeams are cast from a low sun along breakers, when the shadows will be found in a state of perpetual transition, now defined for an instant on a mass of foam, then lost in an interval of smooth water, then coming through the body of a transparent wave, then passing off into the air upon the dust of the spray—supplying, as they do in nature, exhaustless combinations of ethereal beauty. From Turner's habit of choosing for his subjects sea much broken with foam, the shadows in his works are more conspicuous than in Stanfield's, and may be studied to greater advantage. To the works of these great painters those of Vandewelde may be opposed for instances of the impossible. The black shadows of this latter painter's near waves supply us with innumerable and most illustrative examples of everything which sea shadows are *not*.

Finally, let me recommend your correspondent, if he wishes to obtain perfect knowledge of the effects of shadow on water, whether calm or agitated, to go through a systematic examination of the works of Turner. He will find *every* phenomenon of this kind noted in them with the most exquisite fidelity. The Alnwick Castle, with the shadow of the bridge cast on the dull surface of the moat, and mixing with the reflection, is the most finished piece of water-painting with which I am acquainted. Some of the recent Venices have afforded exquisite instances of the change of colour in water caused by shadow, the illumined water being transparent and green, while in the shade it loses its own colour and takes the blue of the sky.

But I have already, Sir, occupied far too many of your valuable pages, and I must close the subject, although hundreds of points occur to me which I have not yet illustrated.\* The discussion respecting the Grotto of Capri is somewhat irrelevant, and I will not enter upon it, as thousands of laws respecting light and colour are there brought into play in addition to the water's incapability of shadow. But it is somewhat singular that the Newtonian principle, which your correspondent enunciates in conclusion, is the *very cause* of the incapability of shadow which he disputes. I am not, however, writing a treatise on optics, and therefore can at present do no more than simply explain what the Newtonian law actually signifies, since, by your correspondent's enunciation of it, "pellucid substances reflect light

\* Among other points I have not explained why water, though it has no shadow, has a dark side. The cause of this is the Newtonian law noticed below, that water weakens the rays passing through its mass, though it reflects none; and, also, that it reflects rays from both surfaces.

only from their surfaces," an inexperienced reader might be led to conclude that *opaque* bodies reflected light from something else than their surfaces.

The law is, that whatever number of rays escape reflection at the surface of water, pass through its body without further reflection, being therein weakened, but not reflected; but that, where they pass *out* of the water again, as, for instance, if there be air bubbles at the bottom, giving an under-surface to the water, there a number of rays are reflected from that under-surface, and do *not* pass out of the water, but return to the eye; thus causing the bright luminosity of the under bubbles. Thus water reflects from both its surfaces—it reflects it when passing out as well as when entering; but it reflects none whatever from its own interior mass. If it did, it would be capable of shadow.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

The Author of "Modern Painters."

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FURTHER REMARKS BY THE EDITOR.

*"Where there is much desire to learn, there will be much arguing, much writing, and many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the waking."*—MILTON.

If Mr. Maw had given the Editor an opportunity he would have asked for a further explanation of certain points in that gentleman's letter, which are not quite clear, and which would have obviated the risk of misinterpretation always necessary even in such amicable disputes as the present.

It is often curious to observe how widely men appear to differ who in reality think alike. However, the first remark in Mr. Maw's letter strikes at once at the root of all accommodation or agreement as to a similarity of opinions, if the terms in which it is given are clearly understood. The experiment of the *Tub* seems useless, since the demonstration is complete without it—that or any other experiment. If shadows become less and less apparent as the substances upon which they fall become less and less opaque, what experiment is necessary to prove that upon a substance of *no opacity* there will be no shadow? If an island were placed in a perfectly clear lake of water, and a streak of shadow were thrown across both the water and the island, it would appear strongly defined on the latter, and be invisible on the former. But supposing that the *substance* of the island could be changed from earth to amber, for instance, to a substance still more transparent, and then to crystal, at each change this shadow would be weakened, and at last quite lost: so that to have a shadow upon water as distinct as it is seen upon land is an anomaly and an impossibility. But contrast, it is said, will give the effect of shadow. This does not alter the fact, and, moreover, it is not correct. As the writer is fond of experiments, let him take a clean-wiped looking-glass, and put it in a position so as to receive a streak of shadow across it: he will observe, owing to a slight opacity it is impossible to get rid of, the slightest shadow in the world upon

its surface. Let him try to increase this shadow by means of contrast such as he speaks of, and he will discover his error. If the glass lay upon a table the image of the ceiling will appear; it will be of a middle tone perhaps, so that shadow is not *likely* to appear upon it: but let it be white, or remove the ceiling and catch the bright sky—get the image of the brightest cloud or the bright sun himself,—none of these will by contrast increase the force of the shadow, but, on the contrary, destroy it. If the ceiling be blackened—quite black, a tender shadow is not likely to appear upon *that*: so that shadow cannot possibly be strengthened by means of contrast, as is asserted. Nature does not do things without a motive and an end; and when she contrived that polished surfaces should mimic and image objects, she took care not to allow her purpose to be interfered with and spoiled by letting shadows fall upon and obscure what she intended should be seen. After having painted the image, or the reflection\* as it is commonly called, of a town—Venice, for instance, in the smooth Adriatic—he must be a *bold* artist who would throw a shadow across any portion of it: broken it may be by several causes, but shadowed by none.

There is a method by which shadows and contrasts may be increased; and if it be this which Mr. Maw means he is perfectly right. If the illuminating body be placed directly *facing* the spectator, and be at the same time the light which causes shadows, and the *luminosity* which is reflected or *imaged*, and if the eye which beholds these shadows be in the right situation for seeing the *reflections* too, then and in that case these shadows will appear by the *contrast* darker than when seen without such reflections. But the cases in question are those in which the light comes from one quarter and the reflections from another,—say the light from the left, and the reflections from the point facing the spectator. In such cases shadows are destroyed on all substances opaque or shining, just in proportion to their degree of polish, or their power of *imaging* objects. This light which falls on objects, which is reflected to the eye of the spectator, and which, for the want of a better name, may be called *mirror-light*, necessarily destroys shadow in proportion as it conveys and impresses on bodies its own image and character.

As to the other cause of the absence of shadow from clear water, we may readily understand it, when we reflect that light *enters* water freely, and does not fall upon it except in the way described. Water, therefore, is a *mass of light*. How is shadow to appear upon that which destroys it, or light to show itself upon that which is already light? It would be as rational to expect to see a shadow upon *flame*, thus making it both cause and consequence. The experiment recommended of the Tub *might* prove very deceptive. Light let *into* the water would no doubt illuminate the

\* That the philosophy of art is in a bad condition, may be readily understood by the want of terms properly expressive of their objects. For instance, *that* light which falls or *impinges* on every kind of substance from the opaque to the shining, and which is seen only by the eye of the spectator placed at the exact angle which corresponds with the *incidental* one, *has no name*. We call it *reflected* light, although we know that reflected light is another thing—light *returned* from objects. It is the same with colour, of course. If a person standing before a window holds up his arm and hand so as to receive the light from the window upon it, there will be two kinds of light or effects—one which may be seen by every body from every situation, and one which he only can see; and for this light or effect there is no name. Every substance is more or less a *mirror*, and images what impinges upon it in a degree more or less perfect in proportion to its polish.

bottom and sides of the receptacle; but light admitted through a hole in the screen would not appear upon the surface *as a light*, although as an *image* it certainly might. A hole cut in the roof of the Grotto of *Capri* would no doubt illuminate the whole mass of water it would enter, but not appear upon the surface. Perhaps it may be admitted, and it makes no difference as regards the *principle* involved in the *proposition*, that upon the most transparent substances the smallest possible quantity of shadow is just perceptible. Some slight impurities are always present; and, as has been conjectured in former remarks, the difference of *density* itself may, as far as it extends, be a cause of admitting shadow; for we know that the *refraction* of rays is a cause of obscurity, and the lessening of light, as is proved in optical instruments. To have a shadow as distinct on the sea as on a grass field, the water must be as opaque as the earth!

The inquiry into this matter is a very interesting one, and, it is hoped, has been pursued in that mode which is rather calculated to leave the advantages of information than the unpleasant effects of clashing opinion.

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## AN. ESSAY ON SCULPTURE.

BY COUNT HAWKS LE GRICE.—*Rome.*

(Continued from p. 280.)

THE most celebrated sculptors with which this period opens were Hegias, Ageladas, Phidias, Pythagoras, Myron, Polycletus, Alcamenes and others. Hegias, or Hegesias, is said to have been little removed from the Æginetan school, as was natural, and his productions are wanting in natural ease and softness.\* Ageladas was the master of Phidias, Polycletus, and Myron; and may be said to stand in the same relation to sculpture that Pietro Perugino, the master of Raphael, stands in with regard to painting. Phidias, a native of Athens, the son of Charmisdas, as we know from Pausanias and Strabo, was born about 484 years before Christ, and flourished in his native city during the administration of Pericles, by whom his talents were fostered and rewarded, and who placed under his care the direction of the public works.†

To so high a degree of perfection did Phidias bring the sculptor's art, that the fragments which remain constitute a standard of perfection, and realise in the cold marble all the divine qualities of ideal beauty. The works for which he was most celebrated were his statue of the Olympian Jupiter at Elis, and that of Minerva in the Parthenon at Athens, both of colossal dimensions, and composed of ivory and gold. Of these no remains have been preserved; but the sculptures of the pediments, the metopes and portions of the frieze which adorned the Parthenon, and which now form so valuable a part of Greek sculpture in the British Museum, enable us in some sort to appreciate his powers. These productions are noble examples of that grand style of which Phidias was the founder. Some of the details of these sculptures exhibit considerable inequalities, owing to the greater or less degree of talent in the inferior artificers employed in their mechanical execution: but they all bear unequivocal marks of the master mind and

\* Quint. Orat. Institut.

† Plutarch. in Vit. Pericli



hand by which they were conceived and modelled. They are all wonderfully true to nature; that is to say, to universal nature without individuality: and they are the first works in which we recognise that combination of perfections collected by the creative powers of genius, refined by high culture, which is now characterised as the beau ideal. Mutilated though they unfortunately are, the statue of the Ilyssus, the Theseus, the Neptune, and the draped groups possess a grandeur, and simplicity, and truth to nature, which are unrivalled in the annals of ancient or modern art. Nor is it in the nude alone that these great qualities are exhibited: the drapery also bespeaks the sublime and cultivated genius of Phidias. It is executed with the utmost skill and attention, and yet is flowing and rich; whilst it exhibits to the best advantage, and in a manner the most natural, the action and contour of the limbs, which it decorates. In a word, simplicity and grandeur are the two great constituents of the sublime in the productions of nature as well as of man; and these are the grand characteristics of the great father of Grecian sculpture.

Pythagoras is said to have been the first who represented the veins and nerves in his statues\*; and a statue by him of a wounded man won universal admiration by the admirable manner in which it expressed his anguish. There seem to have been several sculptors of this name; but the sculptor just mentioned, who was the chief of the name, was a scholar of the school of Clearchus, both of Rhegium.

Myron seems to have excelled particularly in brass; and his Discobolus is minutely described by Lucian† and Quintillian.‡

Polycletus was an artist of high reputation; but he appears to have been particularly remarkable for the great care and attention with which he finished his productions, and which obtained for one of his works the appellation of the *Canon*, which was appealed to as the "Rule of Art."§

Alcamenes was considered second only to Phidias||, and is said to have had the honour of contending with him in executing a work for the Athenians. Two of his works are particularly noticed for their excellence, one a statue of Pantathius, the other a Venus; and in this latter work he is said to have been assisted by Phidias.¶ Our limits do not allow us to dwell longer on this second or Phidian period, and we therefore pass on to that of Praxiteles.

Praxiteles was a native of Gnidos, and was born about the year 364 B. C. He is pre-eminent for his happy union of elegance and simplicity, of refinement and purity, of softness and force. He is said to have been the first who represented Venus naked, an innovation which was deemed indecorous, but was excused on account of the beauty of the performance.

Lysippus, a native of Sicyon, was the favourite sculptor of Alexander the Great, having alone enjoyed the privilege of making his statues.\*\* He appears to have wrought in metal only, as we learn from Aristotle, the preceptor of Alexander. Of the 610 works executed by him not one remains; for the Venetian horses, originally brought from Chios by Theodosius the younger, are altogether unworthy of him. His Tarentine Jupiter, sixty feet high, is particularly noticed by the ancients, as are also twenty-one equestrian statues of Alexander's body-guard who fell at the Granicus, and whose statues subsequently adorned the portico of Octavia in Rome. He

\* Philopseude.

† Plin. Hist. Nat. Lib. xxxiv. c. 8.

|| Lucian, Pliny, Pausanias.

† Orat. Institut.

§ Quintil. Lib. xii.

¶ Ib.

\*\* Plin. Lib. viii. c. 37.

is particularly commended for the natural roundness of form given to his figures, and for their admirable execution and finish. The school of Lysippus carried sculpture to its highest perfection; and the sculptors who followed only imitated their predecessors; or, if they dared to invent, produced works of inferior merit. From the Rhodian school, however, emanated some specimens of sculpture, which deserve to be spoken of with admiration. The Laocoon, the group of Dirce commonly called the Toro Farnese, and the famous Colossus, were executed by Rhodians; and it is recorded, that from this little island, which is only forty miles long by fifteen broad, the Roman conqueror carried off not less than three thousand statues.

From the period of the dismemberment of the Macedonian empire, which took place after the death of Alexander the Great, who died in the year 323 B. C., to the final reduction of Greece into a Roman province, that is, during a period of 200 years, the arts of Greece were constantly on the decline; and on her overthrow by Sylla, and final subjugation by Cæsar, when the sun of Grecian liberty had set for ever, the vigour of her genius was paralysed; the splendour of her ancient glories faded away; and the Fine Arts, which had long languished under disheartening vicissitudes, were bound to the triumphal car of Roman conquest, and led captive in the train of the fierce conqueror:

*Græcia capta ferum captorem cepit.*

With regard to the progress of sculpture in Rome, we know that, notwithstanding the treasures of art transferred from subjugated provinces, a taste for the fine arts amongst the ancient Romans was of slow and very late growth. The monuments of art, which served to swell the triumphs of their generals, they looked upon but as so much spoil; nor was it until about eighty years before Christ, that any disposition towards their cultivation manifested itself in Rome. Athens, Epidaurus, and Elis were plundered by Sylla, and Sicily by Verres; the works of art thus collected in Rome gradually produced a taste for such productions: the artists, who could no longer live in their native countries after their subjugation, took advantage of this growing taste, and sought subsistence and patronage amongst the conquerors of their country; and thus were planted the first seeds of Roman sculpture.

In the century preceding the Augustan age the arts were an object of contempt in Rome as were also such as dared to cultivate them; but in the time of Julius Cæsar valuable collections were made; patronage was extended to their professors; and the Dictator embellished not only Rome but several provincial cities with the monuments of art. Augustus followed the example; and the busts as well as statues of the distinguished personages of those days bear testimony to the rapid progress which the arts then made under Imperial patronage.

The example of Augustus was followed by the rich and the powerful in Rome; and Agrippa expended immense sums in erecting useful and ornamental edifices in and about the city, and in decorating them with statues. The Artists however were at this time principally Greek, and accordingly we find that the Pantheon, one of the most pre-eminent of the works of Agrippa, was decorated by Diogenes, an Athenian sculptor.

So strong was the passion for the works of Art as early as the reign of Tiberius that, on his removing from the public baths of Agrippa to his own palace the statue of an Athlete anointing his own limbs, by Lysippus, the

clamour raised by the people was so great as to make the tyrant tremble in his palace and restore the favourite statue to its original situation, to which the public had access.

The character of design and execution in the works produced till the time of Adrian may be said to be the same as that by which the last era of sculpture in Greece is distinguished ; or, if superior in any respect, superior only in the imitation of existing specimens ; but not in the development of new creative energies.

In the reign of Adrian there may be said to have sprung up a style properly termed Roman, the distinguishing characteristic of which is exquisite chiseling, the work more of the artizan than of the artist, of the hand than of the mind. The reign of the Antonines is the only bright spot subsequently to be found in the arts of the ancient world ; for that the arts were degraded to a very low state indeed in the time of Constantine is but too well attested by the basso-rilievi executed to decorate his arch still existing near the Coliseum. With the reign of Constantine therefore closes the history of ancient Art.

From the days of Constantine to the thirteenth century, the Eastern and Western World was desolated by wars, seditions, political and religious divisions ; and the contending parties, instead of protecting the Arts, often became their worst enemies, by the destruction of the masterpieces of the ancient world. The arts however were never lost sight of in the decoration of churches and tombs, or in the illumination of manuscripts, particularly of Roman Missals, which were decorated by ingenious and literary monks ; and it is impossible not to recognise in the paintings of the contemporaries of Giotto and Cimabue enlarged imitations of those pictorial productions executed in the richer convents. The first productions of the sculptor on the revival of his art indicate a similar origin ; and hence the bronze reliefs on the gates of the Baptistry at Florence exhibit the design and arrangement peculiar to painting rather than the imitation of the antique models. In truth this analogy between the art of painting and sculpture is the grand characteristic of what is called the *Cinque Cento*, or period of the revival of the Arts.

The founder of this primitive school of the modern world was Nicolo Pisano, a native of Pisa, who appeared in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Many of his works are preserved in different parts of Italy, which display considerable powers of composition ; and amongst them the most remarkable are the sculptures of the pulpits in the Baptistry at Pisa and of the Duomo of Sienna, and a semicircular bas-relief of "The Taking down from the Cross," which is over one of the entrances to the Duomo of Lucca, as well as the alto and basso-rilievi on the front of the Cathedral of Orvieto, consisting of illustrations of the Old and New Testament.

In 1350 Andrea Pisano, his grandson, succeeded in establishing at Florence the first Academy of design ; and at the same time left a monument of his genius in one of the bronze gates of the Baptistry of that city, which, although deficient perhaps in the more mechanical excellences, exhibits great beauty and simplicity of feeling.

To these succeeded Orcagna, Luca della Bobbia, Ghilberti, Donatello, Brunelleschi, whose productions are still to be seen, and exhibit great simplicity of action and grandeur of expression, and all of whom drew their inspiration from the great sources of Christian Art.

The fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries in Italy comprehend a period of the deepest interest to the Fine Arts. Florence under the

Medici and Rome under Julius II., Leo X., and Clement VII., became the great nurseries of painting and sculpture; and the names of these magnificent patrons of art, science, and literature, must be dear to every friend of humanity, and every admirer of genius. To such patronage was due the development of that master mind, the Phidias of the modern world, the sublime Michael Angelo.

To notice the works of this universal genius, — painter of the Last Judgment, sculptor of the Moses, and architect of the cupola of St. Peter's, were altogether beyond our restricted limits. Enough that he united in the highest degree invention, vigour and energy of mind, with a vast knowledge of form and anatomy, altogether disregarding every minor excellence of art. The greatest genius however is not without its defects; and the productions of Michael Angelo sometimes produce little effect by their want of simplicity. He died towards the close of the sixteenth century, and the most distinguished of his imitators and disciples were Baccio Bandinelli, Baccio di Monte Lupo, Sansovino, Guglielmo della Porta, Giovanni di Bologna, and Stefano Maderno. With these the Florentine school may be said altogether to have ceased.

To it succeeded a school, the founder of which, Bernini, a Neapolitan artist of the seventeenth century, set all the principles of true taste completely at defiance, but whose *splendida vitia* had acquired for him such ephemeral fame as made his productions in his own day so many standards of excellence. In this school we find nothing but strained action, uncommon arrangement, and flying drapery. Simplicity is altogether banished this meretricious school, which substituted the labour of the handicraftsman for the genius of the sculptor. The picturesque, which is totally at variance with the grave character of sculpture, is sought as the great perfection of basso, as well as alto, rilievo. Bernini was not wanting in talent, as his Apollo and Daphne and his David sufficiently attest; but even these, which are amongst his best works, also attest his bad taste and mannerism.

The honour of superseding altogether this vicious taste was reserved for Canova, who may be justly pronounced the second restorer of sculpture. Canova brought back sculpture to its true standard, which is Nature. He at once combines all the softer graces of loveliness and the masculine energies of sublimity. His Perseus is a standard of manly and vigorous form; his pugilists are at once forceful and scientific; his Theseus combating the Centaur unites nature and poetic feeling in harmonious assimilation; and his Ajax and Hercules are perfect standards of the grand in Art. His portraiture, too, is as elegant in execution as it is bold in design, witness his Napoleon, Pius VI., Washington, Clement XIII., and it is universally acknowledged that this great artist and good man has brought back taste in sculpture to the best standard of Grecian Art.

Of the works of his eminent contemporary Thorwaldsen, who, happily, still lives, we have sufficient to give an idea of his exalted merits; and with these two great masters we close our observations on Continental sculpture.

We cannot, however, conclude this dissertation without a brief notice of the origin and progress of sculpture in our native land. With the exception of a few rude coins, apparently imitations of the Tyrian or Carthaginian, with which countries they had commercial intercourse, we find no traces of the art of sculpture amongst the Britons previous to the conquest of the island by the Romans. Numerous fragments of statues, groups, sarcophagi, and sepulchral stones, attest their knowledge of the arts during that conquest; and the statue of King Cadwollo, who died in 677, is a proof that

they continued to be exercised however imperfectly to the eight century inclusively. Indeed the Roman British antiquities are also found inferior to those of the mother country, owing principally to the inferiority of the masters by whom they were taught in a then distant province of the Roman Empire.

From the settlement of the Saxons, until the reign of William the Conqueror, painting and still more sculpture were in a very low state; and no sepulchral statue is known in England of that period. After the Norman conquest, bas reliefs of the deceased were carved on their grave stones, as may be seen in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey and in Worcester Cathedral. The Crusaders, who returned from the Holy Wars, introduced statues against the columns in architecture; and sculpture began to advance. In the twelfth century Bishop Joceline rebuilt the Cathedral of Wells; and of it our Flaxman says: "The west end of this church equally testifies the piety and comprehension of the bishop's mind; the sculpture presents the noblest, most useful and interesting subjects possible to be chosen . . . and in parts there is a beautiful simplicity, an irresistible sentiment, and sometimes a grace, excelling more modern productions."\* Wells Cathedral was being built when Nicolo Pisano was employed in restoring sculpture in Italy; and seems to be the first specimen of such splendid and varied sculpture in Western Europe, having preceded the erection of the Cathedrals of Amiens and Orvieto. In the reign of Edward, painting, sculpture, and architecture, were liberally encouraged, as is attested by York and Gloucester Cathedrals, by Dorchester Church near Oxford, by Norwich Cathedral; by Ely Cathedral, and the monuments of Aylmer de Valence and Edmund Crouchback in Westminster Abbey. In the reign of Henry VI. sculpture continued to progress as the monuments of that age attest, of which we shall notice but one, which is an arch in Westminster Abbey, that passes from the back of Henry V.'s tomb over the steps of Henry VII.'s chapel, and which is adorned with upwards of fifty statues, of which Flaxman says: "The sculpture is bold and characteristic: the equestrian group is furious and warlike; the standing figures have a natural sentiment in their actions, and simple grandeur in their draperies, such as we admire in the paintings of Raphael or Massaccio.†

Of the proficiency of England in sculpture in the reign of Henry VII. we have abundant proof in the Lady Chapel alone of Westminster Abbey, the number of statues within and without which is said to have amounted to three thousand! Even at this day their number is very considerable; and that the artists were English is inferred from the names of several mentioned in original documents regarding the Chapel.‡

With the reign of Henry VIII. and his rupture with the Holy See commences a long, a dreary, and a desolating era for the Arts in England. It is with pain that we advert to the fact; but historic truth imposes upon us the painful duty. Lest however we may seem to any of our readers to write under the influence of religious bias, and lest we may give offence even to the prejudices of our Protestant brethren, we shall leave the disagreeable task of describing this sudden extinction of the national school of sculpture to an unsuspected authority, himself an English Protestant and an eminent sculptor. "After the observations on this building," says Flax-

\* Lecture I.

† Ibid.

‡ See Britton's Architectural Antiquities, and Vasari's Life of Torrigiano. Torrigiano was employed at the tomb only.

man, "we must take a long farewell of such noble and magnificent efforts of art, in raising which the intention of our ancestors was to add a solemnity to religious worship, to impress on the mind those virtues which adorn and exalt humanity. The reign of Henry VIII., and those immediately succeeding him, were employed in settling disputes of faith by public executions; and the spirit of persecution extended equally to man and his labours. Henry VIII. issued an injunction that all images that obtained particular veneration should be taken down and removed from the churches; and in the reign of Edward VI. the Protector and Council ordered all images without distinction to be thrown down and destroyed. This was executed on pictures as well as sculpture; and there is good reason to believe that we are indebted to the immense number of these works for what remains of them at this day.

"Had the Popes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries" (continues Flaxman) "been actuated by the same iconoclastic fury against the remains of Greek and Roman superstition, we should have been unacquainted with the Apollo Belvedere, the Venus of Praxiteles, the Laocoon, the Niobe Family, and the other wonders of Grecian Art."

*(To be continued.)*

#### CRITICISM IN ART.

DEPLORABLE indeed is the condition of that art the knowledge of which is confined to its professors — men who, wanting the zeal, the industry, or the ability to become its critics, commentators, and champions, abandon the task to those who assume a knowledge they cannot possess, who take up the trade of criticism as a means of existence, and whose motives are based on vanity and self-interest. Charity concedes to them all the excuse and indulgence which springs out of a plea of ignorance, but neither good nature nor culpable indifference can blind themselves to the mischief of such a heartless and senseless agency. If a new book makes its appearance, a poem, a history, or disquisition, it is judged by those who have made literature a study, who are capable of comparing such a work with its like, and of estimating its merits. If a new opera is born to the world musicians praise or blame it according to a standard of knowledge and taste. If a machine for any useful purpose be brought forward, it is tested by those who understand it, and the inventor receives his reward. But if a picture or a statue are to be judged, before what kind of tribunal are their merits arraigned, and in what hands is the balance of justice placed, and where is the reward that recompenses or the applause that encourages and excites?

And yet, alas! in this is seen but *little* of the mischief and the misery attendant upon the evil complained of. Enthusiasm is in itself a treasure — perhaps, like virtue, its own reward. Martyrdom is sought by enthusiasts often as the climax of a life of voluntary privation, and always as an honour of which men and the cause they espouse are proud. This evil, therefore, taken individually, is but a trifle; it is but the wasted energies, the crushed hopes, the baffled endeavours, the loss of health, the sickening of the heart, the sustained and accomplished death of a few ardent and miscalculating men sprinkled thinly in society. A few so doomed die unnoticed, and pay the penalty of being born before their time, and a few pity them, and thus the matter ends. As regards the few, this is all the mischief that ignorance and apathy can inflict; and even here the hardship is softened by the wholesome lesson it affords — a sample of that kind of wisdom so necessary for

the purposes of life. This is a trifle when compared with the influence and effect of that poisonous sedative with which the feelings and understandings of whole communities are drugged by means of false, and corrupt criticism. One man and his family may die of starvation, or what kills as effectually—neglect; what is that? it is but the destruction of a man, his wife, and his children! The same ignorance which led to this catastrophe, if disseminated and spread in a manner sufficiently plausible, will affect the million, harden their hearts, blunt their understandings, and prepare them for conferring the same fate on hundreds of unhappy enthusiasts still to be born, and yet to be submitted to its tender mercies. It is not the poison thrown into the cup of *one* poor obscure wretch who slinks into the grave “unpitied and unknown,” but into the *spring* from which a whole community drinks. False and venal criticisms, as influencing and injuring a few individuals, may stir our maudlin sympathies, and with our names heading our donations draw forth the reluctant ostentatious guinea in aid of the widows and orphans our culpable ignorance has tended to make. An ejaculation and a sigh of sympathy are enough for the occasion; but our deepest detestation and the bitterest curse of the insulted spirit of truth and justice cannot sufficiently stigmatize and brand with reprobation attempts which are ever active to enslave, mislead, and darken public and popular discernment, and which are as hurtful in taste as they are in morals.

Individuals engaged in this injurious practice are reprehensible enough, but *companies*, who boast an organized system of fraud and delusion, are the bane of society, the enemies of good taste, and the curse of Art. Ignorance is a poor palliative and a doubtful plea with self-interest as an associate. In looking into something of what is doing in the world, it is amusing to see how far the public will allow its own weakness to be taken advantage of even when it is known and admitted that such weakness really exists. I have already observed that in my experience I have invariably found that few pretend to a knowledge of pictures except those who know nothing whatever about them, and that those who are in a favourable condition for judging, that is to say, having no knowledge and *pretending to none*, always speak of the productions of Art with peculiar modesty, at the same time admitting and regretting their want of information. Now it is singular that this exercise of good sense is so rarely carried into matters in which the puffing and the tricks of quacks and speculators are concerned, by which the last succeed and the first are duped. The same persons who know their own liability will submit to be practised upon, and not only part with their money, but what is a thousand times worse, surrender their judgment, prostrate their understanding, and dishonour the natural good taste with which Heaven has endowed them. Doctor Solomon said, “you take all the wise men but leave the fools to me,” a maxim well adapted no doubt to the doctor’s practice. But in taste it is hard to conceive that a very large class can be found who are ready to swallow any nostrum recommended them; at least it would be so if advertisements, notices, and critiques did not team with the evidence of that same kind of effrontery which set forth the virtues of the Balm of Gilead. It is extremely curious, considering the difference in the nature of the things as well as the persons, that the same spirit should command success whether addressed to the vulgar mob or that sensible portion of the public, which, without the shining qualities of genius or a refined taste, have always been distinguished by its good sense.

Nobody of the least observation can doubt that what is the practice as regards the more gross and ordinary matters of life is too generally carried into

the affairs of Art, with this difference, that to the mischief produced by base and sordid motives in the former, may be added the evils which *sheer blundering* is capable of creating in the latter.

No sooner does an event in Art occur, or any sample of its produce appear, than they are seized on by the fangs of avaricious speculators, bandied from hand to hand, and every engine which can be bought, *trucked*, or borrowed is at once set in motion. The confederate and *high contracting* power go strenuously to work, and the world is inundated with flaming accounts of what is to take place. It *may* be that there is nothing wrong in this, but in most cases the interests of Art are completely sunk in those of *self*.

In the lamented death of poor Wilkie every scrap left behind him is seized with avidity. This is as it should be, and from whatever motive it spring, it is homage paid to Art and incense offered to Talent. But here joins on the evil spoken of: the fangs and the claws of speculators fasten at once upon what is to be had, and the public must be propitiated and prepared for what is required of them. Were this done with a just perception of the merits of what is offered, and with any thing like a *conscience*, in that state of ignorance which exists; there would be little to complain of, and those engaged in the project would be fairly entitled to all its advantages.

This great artist makes an unadvised and fatal journey to the East with a purpose, as far as it is understood, which would not entitle him in the opinion of many clever persons to the character of one of the "wise men." However, it was a noble enthusiasm which stirred, and a pure love and devotion for Art which led him on, and which will ever confer honour upon his name and nation. The number of *studies* produced in the short space of his absence are perfectly surprising; the youngest, the strongest, and the most enthusiastic, could hardly have supported the labour and exhaustion that these must have cost. Their peculiar excellences have not, to the best of my knowledge, even been hinted at by the numerous critiques and notices which have appeared upon them. Their merits are, as a matter of course, various; some are slight, hasty, and unsuccessful, and such as the author of them would, for his reputation's sake, have been anxious to hide from the world. Where is there an artist, poet, or musician, or any other aspirant for fame who has not produced *scraps* of a similar character? No sensible person can reflect upon the circumstance of an artist in a foreign country, surrounded by the natural difficulties of his situation, wanting the language and obliged to submit to every whim of his sitters, setting to work just at the moment when *they* are to be had, and when perhaps he himself is utterly unprepared; but fresh or jaded, just as may happen, he is still obliged to use the occasion, or lose it altogether, who does not perceive that an artist must as a matter of course do many things he never desires should be seen by any body? But they must be published, and not with that sort of comment which would tend to explain them, but with that sort of recommendation which will make them *sell*. A respectable house undertakes the publication of certain of these *studies* and *lands*, to a respectable journal *sample* impressions, which are put forth with *appropriate* comments. The of liberality this house must be handsomely lauded, of course: this is a matter *between the parties*, with which the public have nothing to do. But with this comes a flaming account of the beauties and perfections of these works; they are splendid examples of the highest talent that ever adorned the country. The "sketch" in question "is one of the gems of that famous collection of drawings which Sir David Wilkie may be said to have



lost his life in forming." This sketch, "Hebrew Women reading the Scriptures at Jerusalem," you are told, "has most probably been intended for a picture without any change in composition, its excellence being of a kind which an artist could not many times reproduce with equal effect even during the labours of a long life." If this were true, as it might have been, it would be something, but unhappily it is just the contrary — it is exactly the sort of thing that the artist would have desired in its present condition to keep from the public eye. Sir David, never over happy in the female character, has here done no more than repeat himself, and the public have here thrust upon them a jumble of hasty and ill-drawn forms, to wit, the throat and the right arm and shoulder of the centre figure, full of faults, such as haste and unfavourable circumstances may freely excuse, the commonest hand correct, and the commonest eye discover to be utterly unworthy of the reputation and abilities of the great artist. It is really lamentable that no friend is at hand to prevent the going forth of such an example as this. What would the artist himself say to the publication of this sketch as "one of the gems" of the collection? and what will the Doctor Merz's of other countries say to it as a favourable example of the powers of our great artist? Alas! how little worthy is such a production of him who took infinite pains to earn and deserve the high reputation he obtained, — the noble fellow who sacrificed his life for the love of his art, — whose whole practical career was one connected series of intelligent experiment, one unceasing endeavour after perfection! — He who made models not only of the figures he painted, but of the objects by which they were surrounded, and of the *space* in which they were placed, and in addition innumerable separate studies of every part and particular, and whose accuracy in drawing such objects as he undertook to represent is not to be surpassed, scarcely equalled, in any school, ancient or modern! — He who was so fastidiously nice about truth and propriety that after having bestowed perhaps six weeks work on painting a *Turkey* carpet in the steward's room in the "Rent Day," blotted it out and put in a common one, being told *that* was the more probable and appropriate. Is this the man who would have consented to put forth such a production as this as a sample of his powers as a gem of Art? But it is to be published and it *must* be praised! "To what vile uses we may come at last!"

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#### CIRCULAR OF THE SOCIETY OF ARTISTS IN SUFFOLK-STREET.

ARTISTS who contemplate sending pictures for exhibition to the Rooms of the above Society and who are not Members should bear in mind that they can only do so under *degrading* circumstances. By a law, at once discreditable and absurd, no picture, whatever may be its merits, can be hung upon the *line*, that being reserved for the members; so that a picture of the dimensions to which this situation is appropriate and indispensable for the display of whatever it may contain, even though it be of a character superior to any that the Society can produce, is necessarily degraded to the floor or *elevated* to an injurious height. It is surprising the Society does not see the mischief this wrong-headed regulation is likely to inflict upon the character of their exhibition, unless it be presumed that nothing which may be

sent them *can possibly* be of a higher order than what they themselves can produce. The circular inviting Artists to send their pictures for exhibition, *without naming or hinting at the existence of such a law as this*, to say the least of it, is not *quite the thing*; addressed to artists of any pretensions, it is little better than an insult. It is inviting a gentleman to a feast, and then placing him below the *salt*.

## NOTICE.

Mr. RIPPINGILLE intends, as was stated last month, to make arrangements for the reception of *two classes* of pupils, PROFESSIONAL and NON-PROFESSIONAL. It was his intention to have offered with this month's Number an exordium or essay on the advantages of the study of Art as applicable to the formation of a good taste, and also on the benefits of an improved plan of instruction; but on thinking the matter over he finds he has already put before the reader, in detached scraps, which lie scattered among the ten-months' produce of his labours, almost all that he could say upon the present occasion, unless it were worth while to collect and form these into one essay, which he does not think it is. As to a defined and settled plan of instruction, he is compelled to say he has no great faith in the capability of any one system being made applicable to a number of cases which differ widely from each other. Instruction to be thoroughly useful must be adapted to the individual to whom it is offered, if the subject be of a character which is elevated above the gross and ordinary.

Where numbers are implicated it is necessary to adopt some sort of system for the sake of order and convenience; and should the project here mentioned succeed, a plan as to the division of time must be and can be easily settled.

It is intended that the instructor shall read a lecture every fortnight during the season, and that the subject of each shall furnish a theme to be worked out practically and theoretically; that is to say, the pupils shall be encouraged to make essays upon such themes both by the pencil and the pen, and these shall be submitted to discussion.

The grand object of the practical essays will be the proof of principles — the investigation of laws by means of analysis and synthesis, so as to arrive at a full, clear, and complete understanding of them as well as the mode of their application.

The lectures will embrace a variety of speculative points, and every topic directly in connection with the subjects of inquiry.

The following matter will constitute a part of those which will be divided into portions applicable to the time and occasion: — The origin and first uses of Art; — Its agency in the civilization of man and the structure of language; — Its condition among the earliest people known; — Its course from barbarism to perfection; — Its general history; — The common characteristics of *beginnings*, of early and consummate Art; — Arguments in support of an opinion that the Egyptians at some earlier period carried Art to a higher pitch of excellence than that in which it is commonly found in the works which are left us; — That these have rather the character of the decayed than the unripe fruit of Art; — The priority of the Arts of Design to those of Poetry and Music; — The distinctive nature and character of

each ;— Their sisterly affinities and antipathies ;— Beauty and the *beau ideal* the soul and essence of the Arts of Design ;— Their importance to the artist ;— Necessity and influence of beauty upon man as an intellectual being, but not as an animal ;— An examination of theories of Beauty and of principles deduced from the human form ;— Explanation of the picturesque design, composition, colouring, light, shadow, and effect ;— Architectural composition ;— The knowledge of the Artist necessary to the Architect ;— Painting defined and considered in its peculiar province ;— Its real dignity, power, and influence as an intellectual Art ; its offices, claims, and advantages as an ornamental ;— Its philosophy utterly defective ;— False guides and theorists, slavish imitator copyists, and other aspirants considered ;— What the study and the imitation of nature consists in ;— What nature is, and what she is not ;— The poetry matter of fact of Art considered ;— The creation of fanciful forms ;— Their attributes and characters mere natural combinations ;— Nature's mode of composition and that of the Artist ;— Conception and execution, processes, pigments, &c. &c. ;— A standard by which the pretensions of Art and Artist ought to be measured ;— The grand merit of Art lies in its address to the mind, and not to the eye ;— Superior and inferior judges of Art ;— Fine form not the highest achievement of Art ; infinitely greater difficulties exist ;— Use and abuse of the antique course of study and practice of Artists ;— The necessity of having the purest examples both of Nature and Art for study ;— The advantage of stocking the mind, memory, or fancy with beautiful and true images of things for the purposes of thought, these being some of the materials for thinking ;— A false system of metaphysics leads to the neglect of the study of Art and the true character of things ;— Ignorance of the ancient writers on the subject of Art ;— A defective history and false notions are the consequence ;— Lost secrets in Art ;— Principles discovered which lead at once to perfection like that found by Michael Angelo in the *Torso* ; the absurdity of such inquired into and exposed ;— Modern Art, the untoward circumstances that have and still attend it ;— Its fall at the Reformation ;— Fate that attended the first attempts to elevate its character in this country ;— The sublime subject and the noble exertions of Barry in the decoration of the rooms of the Society for the encouragement of Arts in the Adelphi ;— How the Arts rose in this country, and how they were warmed and cherished in Italy ;— Artists of other and of the present time, what society makes them ;— Art excellent in England in all branches for the produce of which there is taste and demand, and not only equal but superior to any thing that is to be found elsewhere ;— Wretched system of education in Art in England productive of an endless train of evils, false criticism and a corrupt taste, the neglect of what is good, and the encouragement of what is bad in Art ;— Perspective the foundation of the painter's art, difference of geometric and perspective impressions, rules and principles, simple and easy of acquirement, but difficult in application ;— The analysis of form a most important subject generally neglected, &c. &c.

N. B. Further particulars may be known by application, personally or by letter, at 55. Berners Street.

THE

# ARTIST AND AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE.

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## BEAUTY.

(Concluded from p. 312.)

VARIETY is not multiplicity of parts and colours, but an arrangement according to a principle by which one part or particular shall differ from others, exactly in that degree which shall best display such parts and particulars, and which shall create between and among the whole mass or series of materials the greatest possible quantity of variety or change of which they are capable.

In order to comprehend this it is necessary to examine the method Nature has adopted and pursued to obtain this end.

It is a well known fact in Zoology that Nature has effectually barred the intermixture of the different classes of animals, and even in the same class that production cannot proceed beyond the *hybrid*. Without offering a remark on the wisdom of such a measure for other ends, it is quite clear that if this were not the case the forms and characters of creatures would soon be confused, confounded, and lost. Whatever Nature intended by the variety of forms and characters she has given of living, as well as inanimate objects, an inquiry by the way which has received but very little attention, it is clear that she has made use of means by which the several classes, both in kind, in form, and in character, are kept completely separate and distinct from each other.

This is a most marvellous and beautiful contrivance, but as a matter of course it is known only by its results, and is, so to express it, the effect of *character*.

Our ignorance of art is preclusive of a number of facts well calculated to exalt our notions and to raise our veneration of the Creator. In modern times Art, and the taste which affects to appreciate it, has just risen to a conception of the mere mechanism and most obvious results: all beyond these is unknown, unthought of, unstudied, and unappreciated. The Greeks, among whom the study of art constituted the first and the noblest object of acquirement, appear to have been the only people fully alive to the importance of character. It appears with them to have been an *extension* both in idea and in

application of form—to have been, to speak more plainly, a classification of form of the most comprehensive and perfect order. Cicero, in his treatise “*De Naturâ Deorum*,” when speaking of the variety of character in the human face, remarks, that the Greeks call form character\*; a clear proof that the embodied idea, as it is formed in the works in sculpture, was not the result of accident, or confined to any theory of art, but was the well-understood offspring of a recognised and intelligent system. Character consists in combining in one specimen all that tends to the completeness or perfection, and as applied to the embodying one idea, as for example, in Beauty, all that peculiarly characterises the sexes, male and female, as well as all that peculiarly belongs to the different periods of life, from infancy to decrepitude. Character in this sense is the same thing as the *ideal*. The character or *ideal* of a child is a combination of all that distinguishes it from the adult, in the same way as the *ideal* of the female is a combination of all that distinguishes it from the male. In this sense the *beau ideal* of man is all that is strictly *human*, all that distinguishes the human creature from the brute. The Greeks pursued art with a deep feeling, and upon principles purely philosophic, by which they were enabled, far beyond the results of mere imitation, to produce those wonderful examples which will ever be prized as long as taste or common perception remains. The character of the *Hercules* is of course a combination of all that belongs to strength; that of the *Minerva*, all that characterises reflection and wisdom; the *Jupiter*, all that indicates mental dignity and power; the *Hebe*, all that distinguishes adolescence; the *Apollo*, all that suggests the idea of manhood and agility. We possess but a few of their works; but there can be no doubt, particularly judging from the *Mythology*, that the embodying, by means of art, real and abstract qualities was carried to the utmost extent, and to the highest degree of perfection. In addition to these mentioned, we have the embodying the two sexes in the hermaphrodite, men and animals in the *Centaur*s and *Faun*s, and an endless variety of defined and embodied attributes in the deities, and the poetic creatures of seas, rivers, woods, and so on.

This practice was adduced from Nature, who, in her own magnificent operations, has offered examples at once illustrative of the means and the end.

The grand object of a contrivance, by which the different kinds and classes of animals are kept apart, separate, and distinct, appears to be this, *that there may be SPACE for the greatest number which can exist between the highest example and the lowest*. This beautiful fact may be illustrated in this way: blue, red, and yellow are the three grand elements out of which are formed all the various colours and hues with which we are acquainted. Now the *number* of these hues is very much dependent upon the perfection of the three elements or primitive

\* Forma quæ Græcè appellatur character.

colours. Their purity and the consequent number of mixtures of a *distinct* character depends on blue being perfectly free from any alloy of red and yellow, of red being free from yellow and blue, and of yellow being free from blue and red. If perfect green consists in a mixture of perfect blue and yellow, these colours must as a matter of course be pure in order to form the compound; if they are not so, the number of *greens* will be greatly reduced, and every combination will necessarily suffer in like manner.

The *ideal* of blue, for instance, may be said to be a colour which has no participation whatever with red and yellow. And here it will be seen that these three primitive colours, like the bare elements of form, are incapable of modification, so that if it were asked which is the more pleasing colour, blue, red, or yellow, the question, to be anything short of nonsense, must refer to these colours relatively, and not to them directly and individually.

That which the inquirer has now to consider and understand is that law, principle, or contrivance by the application of which men, animals, and things obtain their character, and have it so strongly stamped upon them that it is impossible they should be the one confounded with the other.

Let us take the horse, the cow, and the dog for our illustration. What is required to perfect the character of the horse is a certain homogeneity or a combination of materials all peculiarly belonging to him, and *not* to any other animal — all, as we may say, that is peculiarly *equine*. Any alloy of other animals spoils his character, confounds the class to which he belongs, and lessens the variety of the whole creation, just as an impurity in each of the three primitive colours would vitiate and reduce the number of combinations to be made from them. There are but slight differences between the legs of a horse, for instance, and those of the mule and the ass, nor is there any great dissimilarity between those of the horse and the cow: yet each has its characteristics; and the more complete, the more strongly marked the characters of the horse and the cow, the more ample will be space afforded for the varieties and mixtures that may come between. An artist accustomed to paint only human features would inevitably, in putting in the eye of a horse or any other animal, give it a *human* character; and the form of an animal drawn by a person not perfectly acquainted with it is a kind of compromise between the particular creature meant to be represented and others: something similar to this would happen in reality if means were not provided by nature for the conservation of *character*. The dog differs but little from the wolf, the fox, and some other creatures; but if the character of the dog were less strongly marked, less distinct and perfectly *canine*, the animals which approximate to his character could not exist. This distinctness in the classes of creatures is clearly a cause of the existence of many which *partake* of their peculiarities, and could have no separate existence at all if this were not the case.

It is a very curious fact, in looking at *that* which constitutes the

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peculiar character of animals, that there appears to be no principle which can be taken as a guide for their conformation but that which causes them so to vary from each other in such a manner that they become new and distinct creatures !

For any reason we can see as relates to form, or even *use*, the horse might have had the head and the tail and some other parts of the cow given him, and the cow might have partaken of the form of the horse. It would be exceedingly difficult to point out upon what principle of character, or structure, the head of the horse is appropriate with the other parts of his figure. There appears in this but the creation of a distinct creature, and the principle employed appears to aim at and to reach no other end !

In considering the conformation of man, and in regarding him simply as a *composition* made up of parts and particulars, we ought to be able, to a certain extent, to comprehend the nature of a composition according to the mode in which it is understood by artists, and agreeable to the principles of art. A composition, properly defined, is a combination of lines and masses which is *perfect as a whole*. It is this idea of a *whole* which must be clearly understood, before we can proceed a step. This whole is a something which the sense and the mind can comprehend as one sole effort. It may be a whole of any character or extent, made up of a smaller or larger number of parts, more or less perfect, and more or less difficult to comprehend ; but it must not exceed the comprehensibility of the powers employed upon it—it must not be more than they can embrace and include in one sole effort : no part must be excluded ; if it should, this would require *another* effort, and the comprehension will consist of *two* when it ought to depend on *one* only. This will admit of a simple illustration. Let us fancy a series of *dots* or divisions in a manner similar to that given in a former part of this subject, and let us attempt to vary them to the utmost possible extent, by placing them at different distances from each other. We have a line of these before us, forming the most varied figure of which the materials are capable. Now it is quite clear that if this line extend beyond what the eye can embrace at a glance, the effect intended to be produced *as a whole* will be lost. A *constellation*, which would cover the whole vault of heaven, would lose its character, and not be to the eye and the mind what every constellation is—a comprehensible and defined figure, and thus perfect as a whole.

It is this combination, or concentration of variety, in one single object, which renders the human creature more beautiful than any other. In all other single objects, there exists less of variety ; and in those of a general aggregate and diffused character, such as sky, earth, and water, the principles of beauty only are found, or portions of variety, if we may so express it, scattered about singly, or in a more or less complete and extensive state of combination. This may be illustrated, by supposing ourselves placed on an eminence, from which we have a view of the surrounding country. Variety is every where

in larger or smaller quantities, and in more or less perfect arrangement. Where there is most of it, there will be most beauty; *that* will be the spot which a painter would choose to paint, and which all the world, the influence of mental association apart, would proclaim the most beautiful.

It may be supposed that the quantity of beauty or variety possessed by human things does not exceed human powers of perception, but it is required that such powers should be cultivated to the extent of the demands made upon them; if they are not, they will fail to perceive and to be affected by what is presented to them. For instance, it is evident to every observant person that there *is* a beauty which arises entirely from the possession of *intelligence*; and that this is physical, and not fanciful, is proved in the fact that it can be painted in material colours. Now it will require no argument to prove that an *intelligent* look is a characteristic which an ignorant and vulgar person cannot understand at all; and why?—because the education of his sense and his mind does not enable him to perceive the thing, or conceive the idea which belongs to it. This is an illustration of circumstances, as regards beauty generally; as the perception of beauty is educational, the sensation produced by it is in proportion, and hence the endless variety of impressions and opinions derived from it.

As the limits of human powers are marked by such considerations as those of infinity and eternity, it requires no forced stretch of the imagination to fancy the existence of creatures whose beauty exceeds human powers of perception, either as they are at present, or as it might be possible to extend them. Many examples of human beauty are of this character to the vulgar mass, and its beauty which has been created by the agency of art, and which is entitled the *beau-idéal*, lies open, and is perceptible only to the few. This beauty has been obtained by an extension of the principles of variety; and if carried still farther, as it might be by human agency, and as it is easy to suppose it carried by Divine means, and employed in the forms and characters of celestial creatures, the most refined and highly cultivated powers we possess would be unequal to the demands made upon them, and the most exalted amongst us, as regards these, would be reduced to what the vulgar are as regards the other.

The consideration of these facts leads to a very interesting point, a grand principle of this hypothesis, and to an explanation of many difficulties connected with an inquiry into the nature and attributes of beauty. If we suppose the perception and the sensation which arises from the contemplation of beauty to be dependent upon the cultivation and the state of the faculties, by the exercise of which the effect arises, and that the effect felt is in proportion to the perfection to which these faculties have been cultivated, we shall have a clear explanation how it happens that one nation or one individual is affected in a way different from another, and how different explanations and different names have been given to that from which the effect comes. We shall see *why* the Indian prefers his *squaw*, the Ethiopian his



own colour, the European that conformation of form and other particulars of appearance which pleases him, and to which he gives the title of beauty. It is clear that all the varied effects produced, all the varied sensations felt, spring from the same causes, are felt in the same manner, and differ in *degree* only. Thus it will appear that the perception of beauty—that is to say, in other words, exposing the eye to the influence of the physical qualities of certain things, producing in us what we call a sensation,—is of the nature of an acquirement; so that we may say we *learn* the sensation of beauty. Now the inquirer will perceive there is no end to the investigation of such a subject as our sensations. It is doubtful whether there are any simple sensations or not, whether the perceptions of heat and cold, or any other which we fancy we *can* understand, are not compound parts of others, and integrants of the whole. A few illustrations must therefore serve. We may admit, without fear of error, that whether there are really single and simple sensations or not, that they range from those of a simple character to those of the most complicated and multitudinous. This difference in their character is, of course, unperceived and unfelt by us, when we have mastered the means by which we are made familiar with them; for then the most simple and the most complicated resemble each other, as both are felt instantaneously, and without effort; so that, in this way, beauty appears as much a simple sensation as heat or cold. So far from this being the real fact, we know that certain of our perceptions, with their attendant sensations, are made up of a greater or lesser number of past impressions, and that they require more or less experience to become perfect in, and to master, and this it is which forms the most rational scale of their interest and importance. Beauty, as a cause, stands at the head of these, and as a consequence is the first and foremost of our sensations! We may consider that it is learnt gradually, an item at a time, until the whole is mastered to that point at which the student stops. If we fancy a scale divided into degrees, commencing with the lowest state of human perception, and rising to the highest, we may appropriate different parts of it to the illustration of the state of perception of different nations, tribes, and individuals, and of course place the creators of the *beau-ideal* in the most exalted position. The acquirement of the *idea*\* of beauty resembles that of other ideas which are learnt in separate portions, as the sound of a word by its letters, and the thing of which such a word is the sign. In the beginning of learning to read, each letter is a separate study, then the syllables, and ultimately the sound and sense of the whole; and after experience has smoothed the way, the perception of a complicated word, or a line of words, becomes as easy, and appears as much a simple act as any single and detached item of the whole ever

\* Do not let us puzzle ourselves about terms, but let us understand that by an idea is meant first a perception, then a sensation, and then an item of knowledge, the reference to which we call an idea.

did. The next process of advancement appears to be the improvement and perfecting of perception, by giving exercise and experience to the instrument employed, which is a work of time and difficulty. The curious case related by *Chiselden* is a proof of this. A boy born blind is operated upon, and his sight restored. This is, at first, not a blessing, but an annoyance to him; he has the entire education of one of his senses to begin; he had already learnt many things by means of touch, and for a long time after he is compelled to resort to this method when the new one fails him: he cannot, for some time, even distinguish the *cat* from the *dog*, except by his old test. The youth who goes to learn any mechanical trade, has the organ of sight in as perfect a condition as the most practised workman; yet he is a long time before he can perceive, feel, and learn the ideas of *straightness*, *roundness*, *squareness*, *flatness*, and so on; and as regards the mere operation of his hand, although strength and steadiness is very much the result of practice, the skill and address with which it is applied is dependent upon the idea which exists in the mind, and does not entirely reside in the agents. It is with the eye we have to do, but the other senses are in the same predicament; the cultivation of the ear and the fingers, in musical operations, is attended with great difficulty, and after all is directed by the idea of perfection which lives in the mind. A better exemplification, and one which will explain that most complicated of all sensations—the sensation of beauty—may be found in considering the appearance or resemblance of one object to another. The most striking instance of this kind is the resemblance which a good work of art, of an exalted character, bears to the truth of nature and circumstance. In this it is curious to observe how the united force of a host of past impressions is brought at once to bear upon the subject, so that a single glance of the eye is productive of a sensation which it has been years in acquiring a little at a time.

An endless number of illustrations might be offered in *proof* of what this theory assumes; those taken are sufficient, at least, to make understood what is meant. No attempt is here made to disprove, what has been assumed and supported by elaborate and ingenious arguments, that all beauty is the result of association—that *it does not exist in the thing seen, but in the eye that sees*; to do this would demand space and attention few would be willing to bestow upon the subject. Thus much may be observed, that almost all that has been attributed to the power of association is founded in truth, and is not only unobjectionable, but illustrative of the subject when considered as it ought to be—as a mass of causes of beauty, not PRIMARY, but SECONDARY. A man loving the most ordinary woman in the world, may, upon this principle, and the licence allowed him in language, call her exquisitely beautiful. The most uninteresting country may thus be considered the *finest*. The cottage in which a man is born, may not only be beautiful, its humble character magnified into a palace, but its plain walls and shapeless structure regarded as an

example of splendid architecture. There is no limit to the force of association, or the abuse of terms it will justify. In the same way that ordinary things are rendered beautiful, beautiful things may be degraded and made ugly and disgusting! It is very much by the operation of this faculty of mind, that the subject of beauty has been entangled in so many difficulties. Prince *Le Boo*, a native of some savage portion of the world, when in England was shown a beautiful woman, and gave it as his opinion that she would have been more beautiful had she been *black*. The *Chinese* cripple the feet of their women, the *Tartars* flatten the heads of their children; the ladies of Japan gild and blacken their teeth; the natives of other places knock them out, put rings in their noses, and plugs in their lips. This is all done, *it is said*, agreeable with notions of beauty! There are far more rational ways of accounting for such absurd practices; but *if* done in conformity with an idea of beauty, it would prove nothing but that associations are powerful, even with savages, that their perceptions are *uncultivated*, and that they feel it no farther than their *education* in it goes, and they have learnt the sensation of beauty. What an easy solution of the difficulty is this! Let such people as these be paralleled with those mock creators, the *idealists* of beauty, and what is prized by the one be compared with what is produced by the other; and it will be found that the preponderance of opinion is all on one side. The statues of the *Venus*, the *Apollo*, and other works, have, with certain modifications, received the sanction of the whole civilised world, and are thus admitted to be positive and absolute examples of *beauty*. Yet as far as such matters can be defined in a few words and compared, the most ordinary object, animate or inanimate, for which a person may have an affection, may be called more beautiful than these, but who will be biassed by such a circumstance? and how does such love, or the liking of such objects, prove them beautiful!

And here again comes another consideration which is demanded by this hypothesis of beauty. We find that in proportion to the quantity and capability of change of the materials of which objects are made up, and which in the language of this theory is called *variety*, is not only the quantity of intelligence, but also the capability in such objects to take hold of our affections, as well as to excite in us the sensation we call beauty! So that the objects which have been created with the greatest quantity of this property *are those most worthy of our attachment, and most capable of exciting it*. It is possible to love or to hate animals or even inanimate things, but nothing has ever had so powerful a hold of the heart of man as his own species. There is also a gradation in this attachment, as well as in the objects which cause it. The lower classes of creatures have less of this for instance than the upper; it is impossible to make a *pet* of a worm or a fish, or certain other creatures that want form, variety, and sagacity. Under peculiar circumstances it appears that a wretched mortal may make a *pet* of a spider, but dogs and horses

have often been elevated into the companions and friends of men: a nearer approach in the complication of structure, variety, or beauty, gives them a privilege denied to the meaner productions of nature.

Man as the highest object of the creation appears to be the representative of all it contains, and is physically, as well as morally, an epitome of the whole; his structure is an aggregate of all the sciences, his form a combination of all that is varied and beautiful—indeed it is the human creature which *alone* is beautiful, and what he possesses in himself is only that which is from him distributed in subordinate quantities throughout all nature—through every class of living and inanimate things,—from the noblest down to the most insignificant atom! To my mind there is something elevated and fine in this view of the subject, and at the same time something simple and natural in the explanation it affords. It is from a feeling with which we are naturally impressed, and not from a clear perception of this idea, that we borrow from the aspect of the human creature many of our notions of the character of real objects, as well as many ideas of our minds, to which certain properties are attached. Thus, for instance, we obtain such ideas as proportion, order, unity, fitness, variety, uniformity, and some others in which *beauty* is said to consist, and it is very natural that we should be thus impressed, thus taught by so high an authority. I suspect also that we are infinitely more under the influence of impressions received from the contemplation of the human character than we suspect; and that the *expression*, if I may so call it, of inanimate things, which in ordinary language is called their character, such as altitude, breadth, firmness, mobility, and many others, is derived in this way, as are also those of lightness, elevation, or depression, as we find these properties developed, in the arches particularly, and even the *chiaro oscuro* arising from the projections and recesses in architecture. The language we use, which corresponds to our ideas, is full of the nature and attributes of man; indeed, in our thoughts and expression there is a continual reference made to the structure of his body and the operations of his mind, and to the outward signs and manifestations of his passions and feelings, which no other living animal or thing could furnish; and there can be no doubt that much of what is borrowed and employed in our means of communication by words is carried into our sensations when connected with things. This is a subject which has never been looked into, and which can never be fully investigated or understood, except by those who, to a profound acquaintance with nature and humanity, are capable of adding the knowledge of the experienced artist. It is from a feeling with which we are involuntarily impressed by the contemplation of the human character, *without* possessing the necessary knowledge which would render such impressions intelligible, that many of the fancies, wild theories, and systems have sprung which pretend to explain the principles of the form and character of man by certain mathematical figures, such as the circle, the square, the triangle, the oval; the absurdity of which is proved by the utter disagreement of

such figures in themselves. In this way it has been asserted that the principles of the proportions employed in architecture are derived from the human form. Notions like these have gained attention, and, in some instances, credence, from the feelings biasing the judgment, and also from a certain pernicious practice in the use of terms, which is a fertile source of error. Not only do false names lead to false notions of things, but worse than this, since mere words are often permitted to assume the importance, and to take the place of ideas. Thus it is with the term PROPORTION: here we have a word ready for our use, and when we have it in our mouths we fancy we have the idea which corresponds with it in our heads. But upon stopping to examine this idea, and to consider its real limits and extent, we find that it has but a vague, empty, and indefinite sense attached to it. We speak of *proportion* as if some inherent virtue were attached to it, whereas, upon examination, it turns out to be only another word for *relation*. If proportion possessed any inherent virtues it might be submitted to some test to which *relation* cannot. If taken as the name of some particular *kind* of relation it may be made to mean something. To explain one difficulty by another, proportion may be called *beautiful* relation, or *perfect* relation: here is something obtained. But in its ordinary use we intend nothing of the sort, for we talk of *well-proportioned* things, which show that it is a *comparative*, and not a positive, quality in them, and this reduces it to a mere synonyme of relation; so that beyond this in its ordinary use it means nothing. *Mr. Burke* denounces the use of this word, and *Mr. Payne Knight* declares proportion to be purely *associative*, like beauty! Proportion, I have no doubt, is the name of that relation of parts found in the human creature: the height in relation to the breadth, the size of the head to that of the trunk, the trunk to the limbs, and the limbs to the smaller parts and particulars of the whole: proportion appears to be an idea which takes cognizance of the *relation* of parts exclusive of their *shape*. Such names and qualities as unity, order, fitness, and others in which beauty has been made to consist, may be explained in the same manner as *proportion*.

In the treatment of this difficult subject little more than a rough outline or a sketch has been attempted, but time and circumstance will permit no more. If it should make any suggestions, or offer any materials which the inquirer can employ in filling up and in making complete what has been begun, that only, at which the author aims, will be obtained — the truth!

## AN ESSAY ON SCULPTURE.

BY COUNT HAWKS LE GRICE.—*Rome.**(Continued from p. 327.)*

THE commands for destroying sacred painting and sculpture effectually prevented the Artist from suffering his mind to rise in the contemplation or execution of any sublime effort, as he dreaded a prison or the stake, and reduced him in future to the miserable mimicry of monstrous fashions, or drudgery in the lowest mechanism of his profession!

"This unfortunate check to our national ability for liberal Art," continues Flaxman, "occurred at a time which offered the most fortunate and extraordinary assistance to its progress; but the genius of fanaticism and destruction arrested our progress: the iconoclastic spirit continued, more or less mitigated, till its great explosion during the Civil Wars, when violence and barbarity became so disgustingly shocking in all respects, that we shall quit the subject entirely; let it suffice to say, after the spirit of liberal art had been extinguished among the natives, it was found necessary to engage celebrated Artists from other countries. Yet during the abasement of native art, instances were not wanting of men, who might have risen to excellence in more favourable times. This has been proved by monuments still in existence, the wrecks only of those prodigious destructions which succeeded each other without intermission, from the reign of Henry VIII. to that of Charles II. From these wrecks we prove that from the time when Nicolo and John Pisano restored sculpture in Italy soon after the year 1200, to the reign of Henry VII., we have works of sculpture in England by Englishmen, that may be compared with those of the best Italian Artists of the same times." Thus far Flaxman.

The British school of sculpture may be said to have been revived by Banks, born in 1738, died in 1805. Few have excelled him in power of modelling; and his works have eclipsed most, if not all, his continental contemporaries, who, before the appearance of Canova, gave indications of reviving Art; but Flaxman, whom we have just quoted, has done more for English sculpture than any other English Artist. His style is learned, powerful and simple; and to his merits Count Cicognara, in his valuable work on Sculpture, bears this high testimony: "To Flaxman our obligations are very great, since, as far as our acquaintance with his works extends, they served nobly to elevate from a certain monotonous lethargy and to create afresh that taste for the severe and golden style of antiquity which he applied to his own inventions." Of him also we have the following just eulogy from the pen of Sir Richard Westmacott: "The honour of giving a new direction to taste," says Sir Richard, "and of establishing this Art on true principles is certainly due to Flaxman and Canova. In the *Thesens* of Canova, and of his best and earliest works, we recognise the long-lost purity of form and a decided devotion to the simplicity of the antique: in the designs of Flaxman, in like manner, simplicity, grace, and expression resume their influence in the place of long-established affectation and distortion. This simple taste, of which the earlier works of Canova gave promise, it must be allowed is occasionally less conspicuous in some of the later productions of this master; exceptions will also be made to Flaxman, in whose works execution will be found a very secondary object compared with design; but the works of these distinguished Artists are before the world, and their merits have been too often discussed to render it necessary here to en-

large upon them. The influence of these second restorers of Sculpture, as they may be called, on the art of their day is acknowledged; and though distinct schools have arisen out of those which they formed, to them must be attributed the merit of having at least directed the attention of Artists and the admirers of Art to that which is really excellent." We shall merely add to this high but just eulogy that Flaxman's designs from Homer, his statues of Mr. Pitt and Sir Joshua Reynolds, the monuments of Montague, Howe, and Nelson, the group of Michael and Satan are so many enduring testimonies to justify this character.

Happily a new era for sculpture has begun to shine on Protestant countries; witness the labours of Thorwaldsen, which enrich and adorn his native country. The cathedral church of St. Mary in Copenhagen may vie in this respect with any other sacred edifice of the same dimensions in the Christian world. Its portico is enriched with colossal statues of the Evangelists: its tympanum is adorned with seventeen figures larger than life, representing the preaching of St. John in the desert; its baptistery, the walls of which are decorated with several bas-reliefs, possesses an exquisitely sculptured font: over the door of the sacristy is a bas-relief representing the institution of the B. Eucharist; and the walls of the sacristy also are rich in bas-reliefs. The nave is adorned with a succession of basso-relievi representing scriptural subjects: along it are ranged the twelve colossal Apostles; and, to complete the whole, in the tribune, facing the spectator, stands the grand colossal Christ! The large sum of money, too, which the royal munificence compelled the sculptor to accept, Thorwaldsen nobly allocated to the erection of a national gallery; and thus has he laid the foundation of a national model school of sculpture in his native country.

And shall England be found last in this race of glory? No! her national school is already founded, and founded on the most solid principles of sound judgment and pure taste. Let but the superstructure continue to rise in a manner worthy of so secure a foundation and such happy auspices: let the classic models continue to be studied with assiduity, and all modern departures from such standards be denounced as so many corruptions of the national taste: let our young artists continue to visit Rome, where they will have every opportunity of forming themselves on these models, Rome, the mistress of the fine arts, possessing the masterpieces of every age, the best modern schools of art, and the first living sculptors in the artistic world: let England emulate in this particular, as she surpasses in many others, the rival countries of Europe; and, whilst she continues to be, like ancient Tyre, the mart of the nations, collecting by her commerce the produce of every country, and the tribute of every sea, we may hope to see her one day hailed, like Rome, as the protectress, the patroness, and perhaps the mistress of the fine, as she is confessedly of the useful, arts, verifying the aphorism of the Sulmian bard prefixed to these pages.

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#### AN EVENING'S GOSSIP WITH A PAINTER.

(Continued from p. 256.)

*Palette and Chatworthy in conversation.*

*Chat.* You have now seen a good deal of ancient Art in the galleries of the Continent, tell me, Palette, what is your opinion of its merits generally, and what do you consider to be its peculiar excellencies?

*Pal.* I don't hesitate in the least to say that I considered the merits of

ancient Art *generally* as greatly overrated, and, in particular, as but little understood, except by those who have made Art a study, without which the admiration bestowed is mere affectation and empty pretension, while certain excellencies and some peculiarities which distinguish ancient Art can be known only to the practical and well-experienced Artist.

*Chat.* Then you think the world is in error and too warm in its praise?

*Pal.* If I say *indiscriminate*, it is a reply to both.

*Chat.* But in what particular qualities, or characteristics, is ancient Art peculiarly distinguished from modern?

*Pal.* In none of those which lie open to common observation, for which reason I hold that the ordinary observer is no judge in this case, and that his admiration is feigned. As a proof of this, I would refer to the declaration made by Reynolds, that upon the first sight of the frescoes of Raphael in the Vatican, he could not see their transcendent merits, and Chantrey told me also that he found himself in a similar predicament when he first saw the Elgin Marbles; both of which facts have, in some degree, puzzled me, I confess, but still you see the mass fall into raptures the moment these productions meet their eyes. I am quite certain of this, that none can understand these, and such like works, but those who have studied the subject. The great excellence of ancient Art consists in powerful concentration of thought which is brought to bear upon the whole subject, whatever it may be, while modern Art is distinguished by its diffuseness and its prettiness. The old Artists appear always to have been in earnest and to have felt in sincerity all they pretended to feel, and all they aspired to represent. In modern Art there is very little evidence of this: most Artists appear more solicitous about the means than the end, and show a greater desire to make a display of themselves than their subject; so that it is no uncommon thing to see the highest purposes and the noblest objects sacrificed to some prettiness of Art or some petty trick of the palette.

*Chat.* The scheme adopted by the commission for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament is calculated, in some degree, to remedy this evil, is it not?

*Pal.* Most certainly a wiser and more judicious measure for checking the peculiar and evil tendencies of English Art could not possibly have been devised, and lasting honour will attach to those with whom it originated.

*Chat.* And yet, Palette, you appear to show no great leaning towards the introduction and employment of fresco painting.

*Pal.* For this special reason, that fresco does not *necessarily* impose upon Artists the observance of what is essential to the exercise of high Art: high Art, whether in oil or water, demands the same studies and the same qualifications; and while one possesses every requisite necessary, the other is beset with a host of drawbacks and impediments; between the two a sensible Artist will not be at a loss to choose.

*Chat.* Will it be adopted, do you think, in the decorations of the Houses of Parliament?

*Pal.* I strongly suspect that it will not. Before the walls are ready for the operation the strongest recommendation it possesses, its *novelty*, will have evaporated, and certain experiments will be made in the mean time, which will lead to a better estimation of its value.

*Chat.* The adoption of fresco painting in Germany appears to have been attended with some success, judging from what one reads, although the accounts I have seen put forth a statement rather puzzling to a plain man. It is stated that the great object of the German Artists is to create a new style of Art.



*Pal.* An utter and a gross absurdity; and as to the adoption of fresco in Germany, whatever may be its apparent or assumed success, so far from its being a fortunate circumstance, judging from certain characteristics which lie open to every body, it is rather to be considered as a fatal accident. Whatever fresco might effect in England it can do nothing but mischief in Germany, where there has ever been a direct tendency to the dry, rapid, and insipid manner this process of Art is calculated to produce. There has ever been more than enough of abstract and abstruse learning displayed, too much of theory and too little practical knowledge. Men learnt to think before they learnt to paint, so that the adoption of fresco for that end is an absurdity. It would have been far better to have made the attempt to engraft upon the dead stock of German Art the living energies, the pruriencies, the florid redundancies of the Venetian and Flemish schools, or even to have imitated the *bravura* of the English school, with all its wild freedom, extravagance, and unpruned errors, or in any other way to have sought the power of using and applying the various resources of practical, improved, and cultivated Art.

*Chat.* Has fresco no distinct and peculiar character?

*Pal.* It has one which I have never heard claimed for it; it is a kind of mean between sculpture and painting. You will not understand me, I dare say, Chatty; but admitting a fanciful comparison, it is to *painting* something like what a *bas-relief* is to *sculpture*. It is the kind of picture which admits of being executed upon some such principle as that which belongs to this kind of sculpture. It is more an *apotheosis* to nature than a direct representation, and demands less of what is ornate and picturesque. It is, of course, more simple, and is a style of art in which mere outline is more important than in oil painting. I don't mean important in a technical sense, because the processes employed *must* preserve it, or *may* destroy and renew it at pleasure; but because the outline employed in putting in the subject ought to be of a *peculiar* character; that is to say, those *foreshortenings* or oblique presentations of parts which painters delight in, which are picturesque, and which require an elaborate process of art to render complete and true in effect, ought, for this especial reason, to be avoided, because the fresco process is incapable of the necessary elaboration. You never saw, I dare say, an engraver's tracing? When a picture is about to be engraved, a sheet of clear transparent paper is laid over it, through which, of course, its forms are seen; and these forms are all traced with the point of a fine cut pencil. When this paper is taken off, and you look at it, you can scarcely believe it to be a correct outline of the picture, for the foreshortened parts look *so short*, and the figures which in the picture appear to stand sufficiently apart from each other are here all huddled together; there is no room between them, but one appears to stand on the heels of the other, and arms, hands, feet, and other parts which appear of the proper length in the picture, are here mere stumps distorted and unlike what they ought to be. Now this is just what an *outline* for a work in fresco ought *not* to be, because the process to be employed is not competent to make such parts appear perfect. By the more complete process, and by a certain *cozenage* proper to consummate Art, these seeming distortions or imperfections are all set to rights, and the eye is satisfied; but supposing the same kind of outline to be employed in fresco, such imperfections will ever remain; or in order to correct their appearance, it will be necessary to resort to that elaboration which properly belongs to oil painting, and which is improper and hurtful to fresco. Thus you perceive that the same character of outline is

not adapted to both characters of Art, and that either the outline or the subsequent process must be adapted to circumstances. The early operators in fresco were more attentive to this peculiarity than the later; or to state the fact more clearly, they were ignorant of a more advanced state of Art, so that, in that particular, as in some others, in which uninformed people pretend to see great merit, such as in *simplicity* for instance, and some other characteristics, the thing which is taken for an excellence is often no more than an *ignorance*. In the early frescoes the outline just accords with the quantity of finish given to the mass it embraces; the operator leaves off *realizing*, as one may call it, just at the right point; but Raphael and Michael Angelo did not rest here, because having advanced beyond the knowledge of their predecessors, they could not consent to leave their works as the earlier and less knowing operators had done, but pushed their imitation and the process of fresco painting to the same extent as if they had been working in oil; and it is pretty certain that neither of them made use of either cartoons or models for their work, unless in particular instances. These works, therefore, those of Raphael in particular, are complete pictures rather than frescoes, and neither requiring nor possessing the kind of outline described. In the frescoes of the day, those in the *Pitti* palace at *Florence*, and in the various churches in *Italy*, this principle has not been understood, and the consequence is that such works are spoiled by an attempt to convert them into pictures, which, as a matter of course, exhibit defective perspective and false foreshortenings, and in tone and effect are black and heavy.

*Chat.* But are the means of fresco equal to its end?

*Pal.* Yes! if we are to go back, and to content ourselves with a meaner order of Art, instead of a nobler; if we propose to ourselves an end which is far short of the farthest, it is very easy to adopt the means to such an end.

*Chat.* Is not that end equal to the demands of Art?

*Pal.* If vague generalities, and a remote representation are equal to the demands of Art, it is; but in this lies the grand mistake made by the Germans, and those who defend them. It is true that the story may be told, its sentiment, its action, and some other requisites rendered, by *mere outline*, but a great deal more than this will be wanted to complete the work, and this great deal it is which fresco calls upon the Artist to sacrifice, and upon the spectator to be content without. Some of the highest beauties of Art will still be wanting: expression for instance, which should accord with the spirit of the subject, the action of the figures, and the character of the composition, which is one of the greatest difficulties of Art, and which depends on certain niceties only an elaborate and capable process of Art can give, as well as the sentiments which belong to tone, effect, and even to colour, will be wanting. Upon what principle of reason or taste are we to be satisfied with a picture which gives us only *half* the excellencies it might contain in place of the whole? is not this paying rather dear for fresco?

*Chat.* But this deficiency is not found in the works of Raphael.

*Pal.* No, certainly not, for the best of all reasons, namely, because he pushed the fresco process, as I have said, to the extent of oil, and thus made perfect pictures, by which his works are calculated to give a false impression as to fresco.

*Chat.* But what Raphael did other men may do.

*Pal.* Granting them his powers: but they would want his sense and taste if they continued to persevere in the use of an incapable process, whatever

*might* be done by it, when a perfect one is ready and at hand, which of course, in the end, Raphael adopted and relinquished the other.

*Chat.* It is for this reason, I suppose, the Germans affect to regard Raphael as an innovator of the *innocence* of fresco, and refuse to follow him.

*Pal.* No doubt of it, for the best of all reasons—they have never been able to follow him a single step with all the assistance *oil* affords; it would be hopeless, indeed, to attempt to do so in fresco; it is a much safer course to make the rejection of him part of a perverse system at once favourable to an obsolete and incapable process of Art, and to powers that correspond! The impetuous genius of Raphael was hurrying him on continually to perfection; he did not stop to inquire what were the peculiar attributes of fresco, but dashed resolutely on towards the end which was ever apparent by its own brightness, and which, whilst it served as a guide, lighted the path he had to travel. He was no *system-monger*, as is proved by the reply he made to some one who asked him upon what principle he composed the beautiful heads he painted; when taking a *crayon* in his hand, and *drawing* a head, he said, "This is the *principle* upon which I compose my works." As for the trammels of fresco, it is a proof how little he regarded them, when he attempted in the "Delivery of St. Peter from Prison," to represent the effect of *four* distinct lights, in which, by the way, as Wilkie has justly observed in his letter, he has failed. I have no desire whatever to lower the claims of the German school of Art, professedly so called, but in denying to the *Frescanti* of that country the merits and importance which is unjustly claimed for them, I am only pursuing a sense of right I shall ever endeavour to follow. I had a full opportunity, whilst at Rome, not only of judging of the powers of certain men who are regarded as the first operators in fresco by the specimens they have left, but of learning the views and opinions of a number of clever and intelligent Artists, from which I am made perfectly certain that the practice of fresco is very far, indeed, from obtaining popular approbation. The constant, secret, and furtive acts of destruction practised upon the specimens already produced, are *some*, although not very convincing, proofs of its unpopularity; it is from the mouths of some of the most intelligent and talented Artists of the country that I take the tone of my opinion. It is little better than a private wish or *whim* of the king's, who, if he had invoked the *manes* of Miss Linwood, and ordered public works to be executed in needlework, would have given them *éclat* and consequence for the moment.

*Chat.* But if I have understood you right, Palette, as to the peculiar condition of the Germans, in Art, what may be a misfortune to them, might be an advantage to us.

*Pal.* No doubt of it, and whether fresco be exercised for a time, and then abandoned, which I have no doubt it soon will be, a very important good to English Art must arise from it. Men are weak creatures, and must be allured and compelled into that to which their reason will not conduct them; otherwise the advantages which fresco offers might be made available without the evils which will attend it; but as this cannot be the case, the Artists of England will take the good and the bad together, and by and bye it is hoped will be able to separate the one from the other.

*Chat.* You must have known painters of all nations at Rome; what are they doing, and in what condition is Art in the present day? If being surrounded with fine examples of Art has any influence upon the exercise of it, painting, sculpture, and architecture ought to be in a more flourishing

and perfect state there than in any other locality; and yet it has always puzzled me to understand how the old *chaps* got on so well who had no *antique* to study and to copy.

*Pal.* You mean, of course, the artists of the 15th century: it is very true they appear to have had but very little help from any examples of Art to which they had access, because some of the best specimens have been discovered since their time, and the rest are of a very inferior kind. By the same rule, if we admit the fact that painting on the whole is in advance of sculpture, it is again extraordinary that, with all the assistance afforded, sculpture should be where it is. It is perhaps full as extraordinary that in the works of Michael Angelo there is nothing whatever of a *classic* character; there is nothing in the spirit of classic composition, classic form, or classic auxiliary, to be found any where, either in his sculpture or his paintings: on the contrary, if they are not a creation new to Art, they are far more of a Gothic character than any other. It is not often that things so different will bear a comparison; but the style of this great Artist is just as distinct from classic models as Gothic architecture is from that of Greece or Rome. It is singular that in all the various essays written upon the genius of this *master* spirit that a peculiarity such as this should not have been pointed out, as it is one which lies open even to common observation. Whoever will examine the statue of Lorenzo de' Medici mourning over the fate of his brother will find a striking illustration of this fact. His costume is that of the period, his position is that of the *hearth*—it is thoroughly domestic, but impressed with the high character of the individual; he holds a pocket-handkerchief in his hand, and mourns like a *brother*, not a *hero*. His *Pieta* is of the same character, the *mother* predominate over the chosen agent of heaven. In that fine collection of the drawings of Michael Angelo made by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and so mistakenly undervalued and unappropriated by our government, there was to be seen in the manifestation in every attribute of art an utter disregard for classic authority or example. In the works of Raphael also there is an originality and a character which are quite distinct from Greek taste.

*Chat.* It is in Art as in every thing else, I suppose,—excellence takes its own course, and is only excellence when it does.

*Pal.* Referring to these instances, which are certainly the highest in their several departments, it should seem that but very little is to be derived in a direct and positive way from precedent, authority, or example; and yet it cannot be doubted that the success of former times is parent to that of the latter, but the mode of its operation is a somewhat mysterious one.

The present condition of sculpture at Rome, which is more advanced than that of painting, may be said to be a something immediately derived from authority and the specimens left. In a very great measure it is a direct and slavish imitation of the antique, and a mere matter of measurement: it possesses no originality either of thought or subject, is devoid of nature, and exhibits but a slender acquaintance with the principles of Art. I don't mean to say there are *no* exceptions to this; but in general a Roman sculptor is a creature made up of fragments of other's doings and of sheer study. Canova was the grand leader of this factitious character of Art, the great merits of which were, that it echoed, recalled, and repeated something of the purity of better times, and helped to knock down the vile taste which had been introduced by Bernini: pity it could not have operated in the same way upon his productions. Even Thorwaldsen, who is really a genius, yielded to the influence which affects all, for the greater part of his long life;

and has only in his last great work, "The Preaching of St. John in the Wilderness," thrown it off, and asserted his own powers. This work reminds you of the Elgin Marbles, and the statue of the Apollo, in which Nature and Art are united in a way found in no other works. Rome, as regards sculpture, is a great manufactory of figures in clay and marble, conducted upon the same principles and by the same class of operators.

In painting, the noble examples of Art left in the Vatican, and still displayed in the numerous galleries of the nobility, appear to exist for no other purpose than to excite the money-getting expectations of the copyists. Every attribute, quality, merit, and excellence of Art is otherwise as utterly neglected as if it did not exist, both by these pedlars in Art, and what is still more astonishing, by the great mass of the painters themselves. The very men who rave about Raphael and Correggio are those who, judging from their own productions, you would denounce as incapable of estimating the meanest of their merits. I don't mean because these productions are bad, but because they are entirely distinct from any resemblance in feeling or operation from these great masters, and downright fac-similes of the doings of some clique or sect, whose mannered productions are a disgrace to Art. Rome is at once a great republic of Art, the best post of observation, and the worst school in existence. It is split into a dozen sects as regards painting, each reprobating the other, and all despising most unanimously the Arts of England.

*Chat.* The devil —

*Pal.* Don't start, Chatty ; I shall tell you more presently, which will raise your patriotic spleen to the boiling point. First, there is the French Academy posted upon the *Pincian* hill, and located in one of the noble palaces of the Medici, with its president, its professors, its gallery of casts, its library, and its life academy. To this paradise and convenient abode of the Arts, and all that is necessary to them, is attached a splendid garden of immense extent, with trees and shady walks ; and scattered about in this beautiful solitude and quiet retreat are the studios of the pupils, the envy of all classes of Artists resident at Rome, whose painting rooms are confined to dirty streets, the disturbance of the rabble, or the *sky-parlours* of the highest houses. In the French Academy every thing is thoroughly French *couleur de rose*, as regards itself, and *lead colour* in all that relates to the representation of God's creation. Raphael and Titian are talked of, of course,—and even here are great men ; Rubens almost tolerable ; Reynolds, Lawrence, and the rest, not worth consideration. However little the last might know, the first, by the general consent of the world, knew something of colour at all events : this is admitted, and, if you will believe what is said even here, admired. But use your eyes, and ask yourself or others how it happens that you never see their excellences in particular, and some others even *attempted* in the French school ? You will find that M. *Ingres*, the leader of the school, and idol of a clique, has a system of his own, which, although not proclaimed in so many words, is considered capable of producing greater effects than any produced by the "divine" Raphael. If you have any doubt of its being a system which prevails, go to the annual display of the works of the school, and you will find them all alike. I had an opportunity whilst at Rome of seeing four annual exhibitions, the works of the pupils of the French Academy, and each worse than the other. Indeed, that of 40 or 41 was so atrociously bad—the public voice was so much against it, that it only continued open three or four days, instead of the usual time. In order to give some idea of the taste in colour, and the pecu-

liar advantage of having studied Raphael and Titian, I must tell you that at one of these *exposés* there was a picture of Prometheus chained. This figure was a very exact matter-of-fact resemblance of the model — the little fellow from whom it was painted. All the proportions of a small man were in it; but in order to make him sufficiently *big* to suit the story, he was represented on a *larger scale* than the figures about him, which were three females, most *artistically* coloured, the one in *red*, the other in *blue*, and the third in *yellow*! Just before leaving the presidentship of the Roman Academy, M. Ingres made a display of some of his own pictures, and an *exposé* of himself. It was curious, during the few days these pictures were exhibiting, to hear the opinions respecting them. There was no great variety — indeed only *two*; nobody expressed any *doubt* as to their merits: but one set of visitors denounced them as below criticism, while another swore that they were the finest things ever produced by human means: this of course was the clique of the artist. Now it was precisely in the same way that the partizans of the several sects in Art spoke of and considered their leaders. The followers of *Camocini* looked upon the cold, tame, correct and insipid compositions of that artist as beyond all others; but in this sect *Agricola* and *Podesta* were the chiefs of a schism. Then came the Spanish school, strong in prejudice, feeble in talent, and weak in numbers. The Prussians, a little clan, made up of tame copyists. The Swiss, painters of lumpy green mountains, white waterfalls, top-heavy cottages, and clumsy bridges, — in Art as feeble and timid as children. Then the German school, a numerous and united body, boasting many clever artists, enervated and spoiled by a system, or left to run riot, unguarded and unaided by the knowledge of one sound principle of Art; poisoned by theories, unfixed, yet persevering, unsettled, yet obstinately determined — bold and fearful at the same time — a mixed mass of bigots, zealots, schismatics, and sceptics in Art, yet, as men, intelligent, brotherly, and persevering. The most considerable leader of a schism in this sect is *Overbeck*, who, like *Carlo Dolce* of old, has made an *ex voto* offering of his pencil to the service of religion. His influence as an artist is extraordinary, considering the nature, quality, and limits of his talents. He is almost as singular an instance of success in his own little way as *Bernini* or Sir Godfrey Kneller were in theirs; and moreover his talent is of that curious character which ought to be explained, although to those who have never thought on the subject of Art it will still appear an enigma. *Overbeck* is a man entirely made up of study, and qualified by the infliction of severe labour. Without one exalted quality of mind or high aspiration, he grapples with the noblest subjects, and *succeeds*; without invention, he contrives to make out his story, and to fill his canvasses with figures; without any conception of character, feeling for nature, or power of expression, he performs that which stands in the place of all; without being able to represent, as a painter, what exists, he renders that which is satisfactory by imitation. You would wish to know, I dare say, how all this is effected. It is by studiously and carefully avoiding every allurements, every temptation to follow nature in any of her positive and direct characteristics, but to pursue a system of *compromise* which will confine all her appearances to one narrow range, and our confined manner of representation. It has not been the object of this Artist to produce expression, but to avoid it, and in its place to offer a blank; which if it does not convey an idea of the sentiment looked for, does *not* militate against it. However extraordinary it may appear, it is true, and there is certainly a kind of negative merit in it. Every person who has handled and scrawled

with a pencil will have observed, that in making an attempt at drawing, the human head in particular, a kind of spurious character and expression will be accidentally produced. Supposing such a person to undertake to make a sketch of the heads of a "Holy Family," for instance, or a scene in which the character of the heads should each be of a serious or devout cast. The parts of a face thrown together by a person who had no perfect command over them would, as a matter of course, leave it open to an accidental *variety*, which would completely mar the *unity* of sentiment required. To draw a set of heads which would *not* do this, even though they did not convey any sentiment in a striking manner, would demand some little mastery, and the merit of such a performance would consist in this, that the spectator would find nothing *opposed* to the feeling with which the subject itself ought to inspire him, and which, he *knowing that subject*, would be disposed to feel. I am fully convinced that the ability to do that which will not oppose the feeling and the sentiment desired, constitutes the grand merit of the class of artists of which Overbeck is at the head.

*Chat.* Well, that is somewhat difficult to understand, but I can fancy it possible. The subjects of pictures are very seldom indeed explanatory of themselves; we are always told the subject in the name of the picture, and thus far we are prepared for its inspection; and if those mental pictures, which exist in the memory or the imagination, and which are the records of past impressions, and the tests appealed to are faulty and feeble, as those of the mass are, a feeble representation will satisfy better than a strong one, which perplexes a man because he cannot go the length it would lead him. Mediocrity is the excellence of a great mass of people. As for originality, the whole stock in trade of such artists will be an *omnum gatherum* of all the schools, ground up, mixed, and prepared for use, according to a recipe or a system!

*Pal.* The whole mass of Artists at Rome appear to act under the poisonous influence of a system, which has for its object to cramp the boundless resources of nature and art within the narrow limits of a diagram, a dogma, or a definition; and prove the truth of Lord Shaftesbury's remark, *that the most certain method of being silly is upon system*. Their separation, their division into sects and parties, their adherence to certain leaders, their submission to the dogmas and admiration of the doings of a certain set, are a certain evidence of the want of something better to depend upon, namely, a knowledge of the laws of nature, and an experimental acquaintance with the principles of Art. This is fully proved in all they pretend to know, and in all they aspire to do. In England the case is entirely the reverse of this. Every individual Artist takes his own course and employs the principles of Art in his own way; and whether he succeeds better or worse in the application of them, he is at least sure that he has a secure and capable means at his disposal, one which has been proved and made evident by more successful operators than himself, and is so well known and established that he need not hesitate or fear to make use of it. This power, like the wealth of the country, submits to no regulations, and often gets into the hands of those who squander or misuse it; but this does not alter its nature or lessen its value. The consequence is that almost every aspirant in Art has some peculiarity or excellence, which rather arises from the free and unrestrained employment of *just and true principles*, than from any peculiar fitness in the Artist through the gifts which Nature has bestowed upon him. Carried into the productions, and addressed to the taste of a people who are allowed the happy prerogative of doing as they please, this leads naturally to that

varied and extensive patronage which is given to Art in this country. Abroad there is a much greater uniformity of object among painters, and a greater similarity of taste in the public; but instead of seeking their end through the principles of Art, the Artists look for it in the practice of their leaders. We are *rebels* in Art, the Continentalists slaves.

*Chat.* Has your wild freedom been productive of any good, do you think?

*Pal.* No doubt of it: look at our school of portraiture, of landscape-painting, rural and domestic life. If *excellences* in Art will bear a comparison, a disputant might take his stand upon those of our water-colour school alone, and make out a case it would be difficult to parallel.

*Chat.* These excellences do not appear to have procured for British Art, judging from certain observations I have heard, and from your own remarks, anything like universal approbation.

*Pal.* No: they have only procured us *imitators*, who want the ability to exalt themselves into rivals. So far from universal approbation, they appear to have raised the ire and excited the spleen of foreign Artists generally, with *plenty* of exceptions, however, that is to say, plenty for our credit: for it is but justice to say, that most of the really talented people abroad esteem English Art, although in general even they have strong prejudices to overcome. One of the most intelligent men of our profession, and one who has had sufficient opportunities of judging, told me, that I should find on the Continent generally, and in Rome in particular, the Arts of this country utterly undervalued and despised.

*Chat.* But Rome, you say, is a great manufactory, as well as a school of Art, which may make some difference in the *principle* upon which *our* productions are decried.

*Pal.* Yes, that is the fact; and a very lamentable one it is: the truth *ought not* to be disguised, and it *is* the truth, that a *dead set* is made against English Art; and this, I am sorry to say, is not confined to the graphic *pedlars* and *snobs* in which that ancient capital abounds, but extends to those who, if they have no better motive or knowledge, ought at least to have some patriotism.

*Chat.* I have heard something of the sort. Did not you and a friend of yours get into some scrapes upon that subject?

*Pal.* Yes; but none that we could not easily get out of. When we heard it whispered in society, and talked of in *cafés*, that the Artists we thought the best in the English school were all bunglers, we began to find our old *prejudices* a little disturbed; and as neither of us dreaded much the consequences, we spoke out our opinions and convictions pretty freely, backed by certain denouncements of ignorance not at all palatable. *Lawrence* had painted Pope Pius VII.; he was therefore "*known*,"—"they could speak of him:" and it was curious to learn the value they set upon his talents. *Wilkie* had at some time shown some pictures in Rome; "nobody thought any thing of them:" some other English Artists had done the same,—they were all below notice: then, there were a few Artists (very few indeed) they had only *heard of*, but whose ability they very much *doubted*. About this period an English Artist, *then* resident in Rome, made a visit home: on his return his opinion of the merits of some of these was asked: the reply was, that one of them was excessively vulgar, and that the other had just talent enough to paint a *badger's tail*! When this came to our ears, we began to think how we could return the compliment for so much *justice* done to our countrymen; and certainly, making *justice* our guide, we left ourselves no



thing in their debt. Such trifles would not be worth mentioning if they were not illustrative of a system adopted and practised, the motives of which are quickly understood by dealers and chapmen, but still they produced a prejudice against English Art. It is by this system that the sharks of picture dealers, the manufacturers of modern antiques, are enabled to prey upon the unwary visitors whom they *victimize* yearly in shoals. One fellow acknowledged to a friend of mine to have manufactured eighteen *Claudes* in one year. The same person showed him a list of *modern antiquities*, with the pretended name of the *relic*, the name of the maker, and the name of the purchaser. This will afford some idea of the conscience carried pretty generally into the dealings and doings of these gentry. Having to go one day to the shop of a carpenter, who was doing a little job for me, I found at his door at least a dozen large packing cases made very thick and strong. Whilst I stood looking at them he came out, and, after his *buon giorno*, began telling me he was just going to send off a number of pictures which a gentleman had bought to take home to America, and he invited me into a back place to show me them. They were of all sizes, some very large, and each was surrounded by an old frame not worth twopence, but the pictures were still more worthless. I asked, "Are the packing cases for these things?" "Si, Signore," was the reply. "But you are not going to send the frames?" "Si, Signore." "What a packing case for each one?" "*Eh! perche no?*" Why not? "Why because if the canvasses were taken off the straining frames the whole would roll up and go into a good large tin case — that's the way I should pack them." The little fellow, putting his hand upon my arm, and smiling in my face, said, in a quiet tone, "*Lei e pittore, io sono farlegnam!*" (You are a painter, I am a carpenter.) I went one day into the *Ripetta* to see a small figure cast in bronze. The master of the ceremonies was a mixture of that pomp and obsequiousness which is apparent at once, and which always disgusts. He had evidently laid himself out for a display; invitations had been sent to numbers of wealthy strangers, almost all English of course. Carriage after carriage and party after party arrived, until perhaps twenty well-dressed persons had assembled. The figure, a small copy of the Dying Gladiator, about 12 inches long, price 40 guineas, — I like to be exact — was cast, attended by no casualty but the admiration of the lookers on. As soon as it was accomplished the *artiste* commenced an harangue in very tolerable English, and at the finish of it he turned to me, who had previously asked some questions relative to the process, which received very short answers, and observed, "Can you tell me, sir, has Chantry done any thing in bronze?" I answered, two or three statues, I believed. "It is of very little importance," he remarked, "what he or any other sculptor in England has done, for the best of their doings in the present age will never reach the next!" O ho! thought I to myself, that shall not pass unnoticed at all events; and I looked round expecting that some one of my *bettors* would take up the cudgels for poor Chantry or Baily, or some one of the forlorn brotherhood in England. I am almost ashamed to tell it, Chatty, no one of my *compatriots* spoke a word, but all appeared as if they fully acquiesced in the denunciation. The *Maestro* smiled with more *brass* in his face than he had in his shop, and, in a jeering tone, continued: "They dress all their statues in pantaloons and boots, I believe, in England?" This raised a simper in the audience, and a feeling in me which I resolved the provoker should have the full benefit of; so, without mincing the matter, I interrupted the flow of what was coming, by saying, abruptly, "Stop, sir; you are perhaps

so much in the habit of dogmatising in this way, that I dare say you are not prepared for a flat contradiction of what you have just asserted; but I must tell you that you talk *as if* you knew nothing of the subject, and I strongly suspect you don't!" The whole audience were electrified, and the bronze caster himself cast prostrate for the moment. All looked at and upon me with surprise and pity. It was evident that the orator hesitated which way he should take the affront, but he was clearly cowed, and the next remark was made in a much less triumphant tone. "You will not say, sir," he observed, "that the taste for Art in England is of so exalted an order as it is here?" "In sculpture it is quite as good, in painting infinitely better, and in everything much superior." "Then why, sir, do you send out your Artists to Rome?" "To go back much worse than they came!" "Did Mr. — go back worse?" "Most certainly. There is not one solitary instance of an English Artist remaining for any period in Rome who did not return mannered and enfeebled, not only in the executive and some other departments, but in the true vitality of his Art. Rome in its best days never had but one sculptor; in its earliest and greatest it had none; and in its present and degenerate condition it has nothing to boast of! If you want examples of the fine, the polite, or the useful Arts, you must go to England for them."

*Chat.* Upon my word, Palette, that was very *polite* of you, well said, and well received no doubt.

*Pal.* I laugh to this hour when I call to mind the consternation this address (a little overdone certainly) occasioned: the company drew off silently, and the Signor appeared in no degree sorry to get rid of me. I saw him afterwards in the *Vatican* doing the honours thereof to a noble lord and two English gentlemen, and could not help reflecting upon the *services* his remarks and comparisons *might possibly* render to the Fine Arts of this country.

There are two other particulars worth mentioning as regards the present condition of Art at Rome. As if Art were doomed upon all occasions to take erratic courses and to set at defiance all reasonable speculation as to what kind of men are most likely to succeed, or what set of circumstances most favour or oppose its progress, it is exceedingly curious to observe that the Artists apparently most free from prejudice, most enterprising in great undertakings, most successful in achievement, and most promising as to ultimate and speedy excellence in Art, are the *Russians*; their perseverance is immense, and their object a highly intelligent one; they neither imitate nor reject the style of any school or any sect, but seem to avail themselves of the uses of all, the consequence of which is that they are original. They undertake subjects demanding the highest talents, the most lofty conception, the closest study, and the longest-continued elaboration. Seven, ten, and twelve years are periods given to some of their works and apparently well bestowed. There were two immense works in hand at the time I was at Rome: the one "The Plague of the Serpents," by Mr. *Bruni*; the other, "St. John Preaching, or predicting the Coming of Christ," by an Artist whose name at this moment I am sorry I cannot recal; but both were works of stupendous labour and of talent, both in kind and extent, and far beyond anything else which fell under my notice. Mr. *Jerdan*, an engraver, also a Russian, has very few equals in any of the continental nations.

The other particular, last though not least, is English Art and its professors as they are found in the present day at Rome. I speak particularly

of the painters. In Rome, as in England, they are rebels, truants to their own school, and adherents of no other. Being under no control, not even that of an experienced judgment, they continue to "halt between two opinions," or more; take up obstinately those of a sect, and wait until they get home to relinquish them. If they remain, they work upon the employment they pick up from the visitors, manage to exist; and whilst they become deteriorated as Englishmen, they become enfeebled and incurable as Artists.

*Chat.* Is not there an English Academy at Rome?

*Pal.* There is, Chatty; and such a thing as would make you laugh if your patriotism did not stand in the way. If you stood in the *Piazza di Spagna*, looking up the splendid flight of 144 steps, leading to the church of the *Trinità de' Monti*, before which stands an Egyptian obelisque of great beauty, you would see, a little to the left, the dignified and noble temple of the Fine Arts of France, surrounded by gardens of a mile and a half circumference. If you wished to take a peep at the temple of English Art, you would have to pass out of the Spanish place and enter a narrow dirty lane, called *Viccolo Gallinaccio*, or Turkey-cock Alley; don't start, Chatty, or look abashed, until you come to the spot; passing thence you enter another *via* or *viccolo* worse than the first, and then, in a kind of corner, looking something like a deserted barn, you find the English Academy. It was once a small chapel, but, ruined and desecrated, it has come to its present use. It consists of one room only, which contains a skeleton, an anatomical figure in plaster, a broken cast of the Apollo, and — nothing else, I believe, except a stove, a large *Fuscone* for burning charcoal, a table for the model, and sundry odd-looking desks, benches, stands, and seats for the pupils. If you go in the evening, provided there is no great attraction out of doors, you will see half a dozen odd-looking fellows in odd-cut coats, with their hair dangling over their shoulders, and each sucking a cigar with a mouth placed in the midst of a forest of beard and whiskers. Here they smoke and smudge paper until the model who "struts his hour upon the stage" sets them free to go to the *Caffe Greco*, vaunt their prowess in some *spree* or *vapour* upon Art. Fancy a set of raw fellows, Chatty, some good and clever no doubt, left entirely to themselves with no guide or advisers, surrounded, too, by the kind of people I have described, it is *not* difficult to say *in what way they will improve*. Here are neither books, prints, nor professors; every English Artist, or would-be Artist, is admissible to come, to go, to work, or to play, just as he pleases; and whilst abundant allurements tempt to the wrong, there are no examples tending to the right, because experienced Artists who may happen to visit Rome are very unlikely to attend at the Academy. Lest I should give you a false impression, Chatty, let me tell you that the Pope does not allow female models to be employed in any public school. Now, my good old fellow, just compare this with the condition of the French Academy, and if you want to give an additional stimulus to your patriotism by learning the value of some things peculiar to the country, let me persuade you to improve your knowledge of the Arts of Design.

*Chat.* That would be no trifling inducement to me who, as you know, am a thorough-going John Bull; and I suppose, Palette, the best mode of accomplishing this would be to read your book. And to go from *small matters to great*, here, I think, you made a great blunder in calling your work a magazine; people are dissatisfied with it as a magazine who might have been content with a volume or two upon the subject of Art published in parts.

*Pal.* You are right, Chatty; I wish that had been the only one.

*Chat.* Most human things stop a *little* short of perfection, and one of the charges I have heard brought against you is, that your book does not take a decided *tone*—that——

*Pal.* Nobody knows to which or to what party it belongs — that I have endeavoured throughout to maintain a spirit of fairness and an independence of thought in the midst of all my blunders. O, I am quite aware of this, even the *dedication* brought upon me a *visitation*. One morning I was called from my breakfast, and going into my painting room I found a gentleman with the first number in his hand. Pointing to the motto I have chosen from Dr. Johnson, "The basis of all excellence is truth," he said, "I wish to ask you, sir, in what way you can make *this*," putting his finger upon the words, "comport with your dedication to the Royal Academy?"—"Upon my word, sir," I replied, "I don't see that I am called upon to do any such thing."—"I have called upon you, sir, to ask if you know how the Royal Academy had its origin? I have studied the subject; the Royal Academy was conceived in fraud, founded in intrigue, and is at the present time supported by absorbing the interests of six hundred Artists, sir."—"I am sorry to hear it, sir; but the institution of the academy first gave a 'local habitation and a name' to the Arts of this country, and as such is worthy, I think, of some consideration."—"Not a bit of it, sir; the Arts of the country would have done much better without it." As I wanted my breakfast, and saw what kind of argument I should have to contend with, I observed, "Well, sir, I shall want contributors to my magazine, perhaps you will be the first, and favour me with an article founded on an objection to my dedication: this will be a novelty; and if I can't pay you for it, you will be content with the honour."—"I could do so if I liked, sir; but I won't promise any such thing; and now, sir, I shall take my leave, hoping you will reflect upon what I have said."

*Chat.* Upon my word, Palette, a pleasant beginning to your editorship. Didn't you ask the gentleman who he was?

*Pal.* Of course I asked to whom I was indebted, &c., and his reply was, "Sir, I am an insignificant individual, and it's of no consequence," upon which explanation I bid him good morning.

*Chat.* I should have been disposed to detain him until he had told me — shut him up in a closet, or put him into the pantry, which, being a painter's, would have *starved* him into compliance.

*Pal.* But, supposing him a painter, the experiment might have failed.

*Chat.* Possibly; but as regards your work, it appears to me that you might have done more, as a witty adventurer I know says, to *consillyate* the public and readers in general; you ought to have got somebody to undertake the *funny* department, and by way of giving *éclat* and consequence, have got your house painted a sky blue, or a pea green, and the chimnies gilt: it is a pity a certain noble marquis has ceased his pranks, for if you had thrown out a hint you might have got up some morning and found it completed gratis. I don't intend to run from the subject, but I *should* have liked to have had a hand in that affair of the donkey. Seriously, Palette, the public look for amusement, as the gilding of the pill you are persuading them to swallow, and if I had had the management of your work they should have had it. They should have had lots of illustrations, lots of anecdotes, appropriate or not, it would have been such a relief. Surely among the six hundred Artists whose interests are absorbed by the Royal Academy, you might have found some ready to help you, and who could have furnished

some amusing stuff connected with the exercise of Art, and the doings of Artists. What is that story of two Artists of old, one painting a bunch of grapes that the birds came to peck at, and the other painting a curtain which his rival attempted to draw? And then there is another where Apelles, I think it is, goes to the house of Protogenes, and not finding him at home, *cards* not then being in use, leaves the old woman, his housekeeper, a *line drawn upon a board*, so *fine* as almost to elude the sight; the which, when Protogenes saw, he tried to outdo in *fineness*, but was outdone when his visitor came again and did another, which, as the story goes, *baffled the farther powers of Art*. This I have sometimes thought, as Mr. Apelles is said to have been a wag, was merely a practical pun to show they were both in the *same line*! Then there was a gentleman of your calling, who, putting his elbow to his side, drew a circle so round, as to shame the best that could be done by a pair of compasses; and I think I have read somewhere that the *Persians*, those tasty people who worked carpets for the *Athenians*, never had but one great Artist, who has left but one great work, which is preserved with the greatest care to the present day, namely, a straight line drawn upon a board without a ruler. Would none of these tales do, Palette? why don't you give us a few of them?

*Pal.* I am only waiting till those of Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant Killer shall have lost their influence and superior claims to serious attention.

*Chat.* You are too fastidious by half: I should not have stopped here; I should have endeavoured to make people believe that the painters of the present day *can* make the eyes of a portrait look at you and follow you all over the room, and point to you everywhere as the feet in the "*miraculous entombment*" do; I should have told them what mixtures would make green, orange, purple, and so on, and upon which side of a sheet of paper it is best to begin a sketch. When I had occasion to mention the name of an Artist I should have told some little story of him, or given his portrait in a wood-cut, which might have been a *great story*, but it would have helped to fill up and saved the trouble of thinking, by offering something to look at. Then if I had mentioned a place I would have done the same, or if I had described any animal for any purpose of Art, I would have given some anecdote illustrative of such animal, which, as memory is associative, would have served to fasten your lesson upon, and made a lasting impression, and the more ridiculous it might be the better. Now I remember one of a *horse*, which would suit exactly.

*Pal.* Pray tell it, Chatty, if it has any thing appropriate to recommend it.

*Chat.* O, as for that I should care nothing about. Well, this is of a gentleman who had an old horse, which was so great a favourite and so docile that he used to come to the back door of the house, where the servants used to feed him with apple parings, the rinds of cheese, or whatever else might be left after dinner, and the children gave him bread and butter. But just after a brewing of strong beer which took place in the family, and which in the usual way was put out to cool in this same locality, the horse got at it and drank so much, that he was found lying dead by one of the tubs. The knacker of course was sent for, who, agreeable to his instructions and the mystery of his calling, set to work, and took off the poor animal's skin, and then took it away with him. His carcase was left to be removed in another direction; but the next morning, what was the horror of the whole house, to behold this same animal alive and standing in his usual place and position at the back door neighing, and expecting to be

fed as usual. As you may suppose, this created no small alarm and wonder; the knacker was applied to in the greatest haste, and told *to send home the horse's skin immediately*: but he had disposed of it, and it could not be returned. What was to be done? An old shepherd, an acute old fellow, recommended that they should immediately kill a sufficient number of sheep, strip off their skins, and cover the horse with them. This was done, and the animal lived many years after to thank the shepherd, and to enjoy the warm covering with which he had provided him.

*Pal.* For the love of sobriety, Chatty, —

*Chat.* Don't you think, Palette, that some illustrations from this story, done in a good, bold style, coloured and hot-pressed, upon demy, royal, or elephant, would have taken?

*Pal.* No doubt of it, with plenty of puffing; and I now see what I have lost in missing your assistance: I am quite sorry you did not call before.

*Chat.* Ay, it is a lamentable thing when a man has no friend or adviser to take an interest for him or to lend him a hand.

*Pal.* There indeed, Chatworthy, you have hit on a melancholy truth, well calculated to upset the effect of all your pleasantry, and to direct the mind to reflections which, in the present matter, had better be kept out of sight. It is a strong evidence of the want of merit, or the want of success, when a man has laboured half his life in the solitude of his own unaided exertions, and when in so doing he has half exhausted the stimulus which is supplied by hope, the health which belongs to exercise, and the pleasures which appertain to recreation and leisure.

*Chat.* With certain other considerations due to himself and his family. I am certain, Palette, that no work can succeed which does not flatter and conform to the taste of the times, let it have whatever other recommendations it may.

*Pal.* My experiment may prove this, or it may not, it is now of little consequence, as upon the present occasion it will be pushed no farther. I think I told you that when I commenced my publication, I resolved to continue its numbers to a round dozen, and if I found it did not succeed at the end of a year, to drop it. With this resolution I sent out my prospectuses, and set to work upon a picture, which I meant to execute in extra time, and make *chargeable* with the expenses. All this I have done, leaving the rest to Fortune, who, whether too much engaged with her special favourites, or not thinking me worth a single glance, I resolved not to fall out with. As I find I have not been able to catch her attention, I shall persist in the attempt no further, but defer it until she is in a better humour.

*Chat.* You don't mean to tell me you are come to your senses, Palette, Robinson Crusoe, or Don Quixote, whichever name fit you best, and that you have actually reached the end of your project! I don't believe it.

*Pal.* In order to show you that I am in earnest, here is my farewell address; read it, and be convinced.

[*Palette hands Chatworthy a paper, who reads*]

#### FAREWELL ADDRESS.

Kind Reader,

If I address you with more than the usual warmth, and by a term the nature of our acquaintance scarcely warrants, pray forgive me; because I am in that condition in which men feel more deeply and think more seriously of

what they possess—I am about to lose you. Whether I have obtained more or less of your good opinion, or even your attention, as that is so important to the object I have undertaken, and to the feeling with which I have pursued it, be assured I am grateful for both, and also that I relinquish such advantages with real and unaffected regret. I am under the necessity of telling you that the “Artist and Amateur’s Magazine” will appear no more; and that, as regards the success of my project, it is a failure. I cannot suffer you to depart, however, without saying a word which may serve as a protection against that which would be painful and useless both to you and to me—your sympathy. If you are disposed to regret the loss of what the partial few may consider a useful agent in public instruction, I will go any lengths with you, but for myself I desire and deserve nothing. As the project was entirely my own, so will be the consequences; and if there are any interested enough in what has been undertaken to wish it had not been done, they desire that which would have deprived me of an agreeable task, and have obstructed a “labour of love.” But there is another consideration connected with this matter still more weighty and important. *Failure* is a word men are in the habit of applying to any enterprise which does not put money in their pockets, or procure them another palpable and immediate good, and in life it must be confessed very little is worth doing which does not effect this. But still there *are* matters, the nature of which somewhat alters the case—those in which a man’s expectations are small, his philosophy equal to the disappointment, his labour, like that of virtue, its own reward, and above all, where his feelings and his faith, in the cause he espouses, are of the true character. Without having much to boast of either in philosophy, or its substitute—indifference, I am still strong in a species of faith which a hundred such attempts as this I have made, although attended by the same results, would not annihilate. I cannot and will not believe that the incense offered to the spirit of truth *is* thrown away, or is in any sense, in which a rational creature ought to use the term, to be considered a failure. The urgent necessities of the world, the impatient cravings of self, a distrust and an insincere attachment to the object, commonly dispose men to think they have done too much when they fail and make a small sacrifice, one by which they purchase what in the spirit of justice and probability may be considered success. As this faith and trust are the only qualifications I possess essential to the task I undertook, of which I can make any boast, I yield to the vain impulse, and assure my readers that I consider my own particular case as one in which the advantages, whether real or imaginary, are fully equal to the labour bestowed, and the result full as much an expectation as a disappointment. That I could have wished the public to be so far interested in my efforts as to have afforded me the means of carrying them on may be readily inferred; but it would be presumption in me to complain, and an apostacy to the faith I profess to allow this to deprive me of my consolation; whilst I am disposed to regard this triumph over circumstances as the result and the reward of the endeavours made and the reliance placed upon the retributive justice of a good cause.

To the few kind friends who have cheered me by their approbation and assistance I offer the only return I can make them—the homage of my heart.

To my readers in general and to the public I admit, that if in any case I have spoken too freely, I owe them an apology, and, as a peace-offering, I tender my sincere respects; and in thanking them for the patience and

attention they have bestowed upon me, I take my leave, with the assurance that I remain still their

Obliged and faithful Servant,  
E. V. RIPPINGILLE.

55. Berner's Street, London,  
Feb. 1844.

*Chat.* Palette, I congratulate you, and if you want any extra consolation, I fancy you may find it in the fact, that yours is but the fate of all who have attempted to interest or instruct people on the subject of Art. I dare say the fact you have stated is true, namely, that people speak of their pretensions in the knowledge of Art with peculiar modesty; but I strongly suspect that these are the people who would speak of their pretensions to every other kind of knowledge in the same way. But let the fact be as it may, there is clearly a singular discrepancy involved in this subject which is found in no other; for the whole world assumes a knowledge of Art in its *doings*, if not in its *sayings*, and whilst it pretends to know, acknowledges its ignorance, without making any attempts to remove it.

*Pal.* There is a great excuse for individuals when they yield only to an influence which affects the whole mass of society.

*Chat.* The same may be said of popular influence, as it affects the interests of every other kind of knowledge or acquirement. As you remarked in your prospectus, dividing the whole mass of mankind into two great classes, those who are labouring to *know*, and those who are striving to *do*, it is very evident that a great deal has been done for the first, and very little indeed for the last: the territory of knowledge is well cultivated, while that of taste is neglected and barren!

*Pal.* I have already said a sufficiency on that particular branch of my subject, and you yourself have pointed out to me the danger to which this might expose me.

*Chat.* I have not changed my notions in that respect; but in going over the subject, perhaps I see more clearly than I did what now appears to me an unaccountable phenomenon of human intelligence, that men should pretend to an acquaintance with one item only in the catalogue of human knowledge, without having bestowed one hour's pains and study upon it. Why, Palette, there must be a monstrous deal of difference between the qualifications for making a painter and making a judge of Art. In all I have heard and read, life is not long enough for the one, but a single visit to a picture gallery is sufficient for the other. It is rather singular, too, that men should pride themselves, and obtain peculiar honours from others, upon what costs neither time nor talents to acquire: I see clearly that a knowledge of Art, although that is greatly advanced by the general intelligence of the mind, is not necessarily dependent upon it, but upon that which constitutes in itself a separate and distinct study. The more one thinks of the subject, the more one is puzzled to ascertain the *peculiar* obtuseness of mind which forms a stumbling-block to the study of Art, or enables a man to *rest content* in the entire neglect of it. It is wonderful in whichever way you view it, and a perfect anomaly with every thing else. Every man is well aware that he knows nothing of Art, and yet he takes no single step to make himself acquainted with it: he has it upon that kind of authority upon which in other matters he is content to act, that the Arts are a great and important good to mankind, that the wisest in the most enlightened times have studied them; but he still neglects them, as if neither his understanding nor his conscience were in the least degree concerned. The im-



provement manifested in every thing else, it appears, "gives no sign" as regards Art. The system of education it seems is much the same that it was fifty years ago, is managed by the same class of people, and productive of the same results. Something, perhaps an accident, may be wanting to rouse the community to a sense of its condition; but I feel perfectly certain that there is too much good sense and good feeling in the world to allow it to remain as it is, but under some peculiar circumstances unknown in other matters.

*Pal.* I have repeatedly spoken of the cause; it is neither more nor less than a *peculiar deficiency in the means of information*, which is proved in a variety of ways.

*Chat.* You have explained that matter I know, and it is the more extraordinary the more it is thought of that no measures are taken for bringing a better system of education into activity and use. I am just thinking that your remarks on the teachers of Drawing are a little severe.

*Pal.* Why, yes, Chatty, taken abstractedly they appear so; but there is abundant excuse in the explanation to which that class of Artists are fairly entitled. Many take to the task of teaching to draw no doubt as a *dernier ressort*, as people do to teaching Languages, Dancing, and dealing in Coals and Spirits. But many also take to the task of teaching Drawing *because they cannot live by Art*—because, pursued in the right way, Art is a starving and a hopeless occupation, or at the best attended with so many casualties, chances, and mischances, that many a man will abandon the pursuit, although it will be the real object of his heart, his ambition, and often, no doubt, the true bias of his nature and his taste, in order to avoid the evils to which it exposes him. Speak to any intelligent teacher of drawing, and he will tell you that, unable to make head against bad taste, he is *obliged* to succumb, and in the sacrifice of his own wishes and his own talents, he is *compelled* to include the interests of those placed under his directions.

*Chat.* I must say that, in our present state of enlightenment, it is beyond all things singular that this state of things should exist. In politics, we have men always ready to make sacrifices for the good of the cause they espouse, and to support works devoted to its support: is there no *party* in taste strong or enlightened enough to do something similar? There are societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge; are there none that will attempt to support and disseminate that of a refined, useful, and ornamental character? It strikes me, Palette, from what I know of such matters, that until something of the sort is attempted, no publication dependent upon private exertions, and involving private interests, will ever be conducted with *strict* honesty, and upon real, liberal, and independent principles.

*Pal.* The time will come, Chatty, when people will begin to open their eyes, and feel alarmed, if not ashamed, that they have suffered those who are near and dear to them to grow up and be compelled to assume a false character of taste, upon as slender a foundation as that upon which their own pretensions are built.

*Chat.* That appears to me, Palette, to belong more to the romance of an enthusiast, than to the reasonable expectations of an observer, or to any deductions which can be drawn from the numerous facts you have advanced. This faith also is strongly opposed to all the opinions and remarks I have heard made upon your own projects: I will say nothing of results. If you could persuade us that a knowledge of painting and sculpture is *not* intuitive, and does not descend upon us like the rain from heaven, it would be like throwing the world back for that period which it is necessary to

devote to the acquirement of what is wanting; and however much the next generation might feel itself obliged, I am quite sure the present would not thank you. No, no, it requires a good many attempts to be made before the whole condition of society in any particular can be materially affected.

*Pal.* I shall please and console myself that I have made one.

*Chat.* The best philosophy in the world is to be content with a little; and happy are those who are masters of it. Mine is not a kind of philosophy very disparaging to human exertions; but I often think of an anecdote told me of a maniac, which I consider very illustrative of all attempts made by enthusiasts for the public good, either in virtue or knowledge. An acquaintance of mine went to visit an inmate of a madhouse, one whom all his *particular* friends declared to be perfectly sane. He found him sitting on the floor of his cell, ragged, haggard, and pale: on his head was a paper cap, on which was written "my name is knowledge;" and from over his head, some how or other attached to the ceiling, descended a yard or two of *string*, with a bundle of torn papers, manuscripts, magazines, and newspapers, tied to the end of it. The maniac was occupied in swinging this *uncompensating* pendulum backwards and forwards, and sometimes he pulled at it like a bell-rope, listening and smiling. After watching for a few minutes the visitor spoke to him, and asked what he was doing. The poor creature, putting on a face of great self-complacency, replied in a solemn tone, "You little know I am moving the world!"—"Indeed," said the visitor, "how long have you been engaged in that occupation?" The reply was, "Ever since the creation of it."—"And how do you succeed?"—"It is as much as I can do to keep it going; but if I did nothing it would stop."—"But, after so many years of labour, you must have produced some important changes?" Looking with some disdain, the maniac answered, "God bless you, you know nothing about it; as yet I have only made a few wrinkles upon the surface."

*Pal.* I am half disposed to think *that* a tale of your own invention, Chatty, because it is so flattering to the views of some of my friends, and is so consoling in its application.

*Chat.* Made the right use of, it may be beneficial; so don't despise it, Palette. I dare say you have done *some* good, thrown out some useful suggestions, afforded some insight into Art and its affairs, given some new views of certain matters, furnished some amusement, and, at all events, have been an agent in a good cause and with good intentions. But as a salutary check upon such freaks, I would recommend you to remember my tale of the lunatic, and recollect, if ever you feel disposed to have another *pull at the string* of the little world you have been trying to move, that the best you can expect to do, is only to make a *few wrinkles upon the surface*. And now, Palette, if you will give me my hat and stick, I shall take my leave, wishing you health and happiness until we meet again, and long after.

*Pal.* Shake hands, my good old friend, and believe me I am sorry to part with you. Good night, and farewell.

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N. B. Complete sets and odd numbers of the work may be had of the Booksellers or the Editor.

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